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WORLD OF TANKS



Open fire!

Greetings, budding tankers – and welcome to our celebration of Wargaming's *World of Tanks*. It's hard to believe that what started life as a couple of dodgily-textured tanks trundling over a scant few maps has since transformed into a slick, ultra playable universe that celebrates all things armour. It's free-to-play, crammed with content and looks gorgeous.

Inside the mag, we're pulled the game apart to bring you the definitive guide to all things *WoT*, from beginner tutorials through to insights into top tanks, handy map guides, tech trees, analyses of the most iconic vehicles, interviews with key devs and clans, lashings of gorgeous fan art... and loads more.

We've also delved into the history books to explore the origins of the tank and regale gripping tales about WWII's most epic tank battles. By then you'll surely be gagging to play – and take advantage of our free gifts that'll give you premium account status, lashings of gold, an exclusive tank... and even an extra garage space.

But it's not all tanks, as we also take time out to explore Wargaming's new worlds... of *Generals*, *Warplanes* and *Warships*. So much to enthuse about then, so little time. Dig in!

ROB TAYLOR
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Giftageddon!
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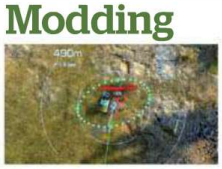
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Photocredits: Tanks Alot

Drive giant amphibious tanks, smash cars to smithereens, fire shotguns and more in this cracker of a day out. **Find out how to win on p.142**

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World of Tanks explained



WHAT IS WoT?

Lifting the lid on the MMO taking gaming by storm. Meet *World of Tanks*.

System Requirements

Minimum

OS
Windows XP/Vista/7/8

CPU
2.2GHz

RAM
1.5 GB for Windows XP, 2 GB for Windows Vista/7/8

GPU
GeForce 6800GT with 256 MB of video memory / ATI X800 with 256 MB of memory, DirectX 9.0c

Space available on HDD
9 GB

Internet connection speed
256 Kbps

Recommended

OS
Windows XP/Vista/7/8 64-bit

CPU
Intel Core 2 Duo 2.5 GHz/ AMD AthlonTM 64 X2 5600+ 2.8 GHz (or better)

RAM
4 GB (or more)
GPU: GeForce 260/ ATI HD4870 (or better) with 1 GB (or more) of video memory, DirectX 9.0c

Space available on HDD
9 GB

Internet connection speed
1024 Kbps (or faster)

An MMO action extravaganza where players across the globe pit their wits and skills against one another in intense PvP battles? That'd be *World of Tanks*.

An intoxicating mash-up of genres – including FPS, RTS, RPG and simulation – *WoT* is crammed with hundreds of classic light, medium and heavy tanks, as well as tank destroyers and SPGs.

Although *WoT*'s various vehicles are modelled on their real-life counterparts, you don't need to be a real-life Rommel to drive one. Combat is fast and satisfying, although you'll also need to be calm under pressure, tactical astute and work alongside teammates to become a top tanker. With historical battles to relive, multi-nation battle royales to wade into and clans to join, *WoT* offers everything a budding tank ace could desire.

Perhaps the game's greatest triumph is how confidently it treads that line between hardcore historical simulation and accessible action. It's an MMO with enviable depth, in which you can dig into tech trees, statistics, consumable items, experience points and upgrades – but within five minutes of installing you can be rolling around a map, pitting your nippy Sherman Firefly against a deadly Jagdpanther… and having lots of fun.

Developers Wargaming are passionate about their game, and committed to ensuring the *WoT* universe is constantly evolving. That means there'll always be fresh content to plunge into, be it additional tank models, more maps, innovative game modes – or even entirely new tanker nations.

Best of all, *World of Tanks* is *free*, so there's no reason not to head over to *worldoftanks.com* and see for yourself what all the fuss is about. See you on the frontlines, fellow tankers.

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WORLD OF TANKS FAQ

Are all the tanks real-life models?
Yes, although *World of Tanks* also includes prototype vehicles (e.g. German E Series).

Do the tanks themselves resemble their real-life counterparts?
They're nearly identical – from firing rates and scattering to specifications, physics, dynamics and turret turning speed.



How long do battles last?
Usually between five and 15 minutes on Standard, Encounter or Assault modes.

Are their training missions for newcomers?
WoT features special areas where only low-level tanks are allowed.

Are battles fought by one-nation teams?
Before each battle, the game randomly divides players into two teams according to the level of their vehicles. The only 'nation-on-nation' battles are special history-related events (e.g. Battle of Prokhorovka).

What camera does the game feature?
The default is third-person – with four scales of remoteness from your tank. Tanks also have a 'sniper' mode, while artillery features a 'howitzer' mode.



What are the controls?
Moving your tank is implemented by standard WSAD + mouse controls. There's also a 'cruise control' mode (R and F buttons).

Is auto aiming supported?
Yes; to turn on auto aiming, train your sights on a hostile unit and click the right mouse button.

Are there any machine guns in the game?
There are, but as there is no infantry there's no need to use them in-game – even the most powerful machine gun is incapable of penetrating the armour of a tank.

What types of ammo are available?
Players can use cumulative, sub-calibre, high-explosive and piercing shells.

What about ramming attacks?
Yes; they're an essential part of gameplay!

What are the typical dimensions of maps?
Countryside map sizes are roughly one km^2; the urban maps a little smaller.

Do battlefields feature destructible elements?
Yes. For instance, you can 'perforate' the wall of a building you're stationed behind, before using it as a port to shoot down your opponents. The flip side is the building may collapse on you when rammed by a foe.



Some map titles reference historic tank battles. Are these maps accurate?
Owing to balancing issues, it's hard to accurately recreate historical maps. Nevertheless, an extensive usage of various historical materials has been employed to ensure scenarios are as realistic as possible.

Will tanks have their own crews?
Absolutely, and every member will possess their own unique qualities that will influence tank characteristics. Crew sizes will alter depending on players' chosen tanks.

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THE 15 YEAR WAR

From a linoleum boardgame to *World of Tanks*: how Wargaming built a free-to-play empire.

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"And that was the end of chess," says Viktor Kislyi, CEO of Wargaming, describing the day his boyhood pastime died when IBM's Deep Blue supercomputer defeated Garry Kasparov in 1996.

Kislyi had been playing chess for seven years. He had competed in regional championships in his home city of Minsk while trying to master "the mother, father, grandfather, grandmother of all games", as he describes it.

"And then the world champion Kasparov lost, to pretty much a calculator the size of your cellphone," he says. "It's a beautiful game, don't get me wrong, but the world of civilisation had to move on."

My cellphone is currently recording our conversation on the top floor of a tall office tower in Minsk. Several hundred Wargaming employees occupy six floors of the building, and the company has plans to expand to three more before the year is out. The staggering success of *World of Tanks* has kicked expansion plans into overdrive. Wargaming are bigger than ever, but it took a decade of hard lessons before they struck gold.

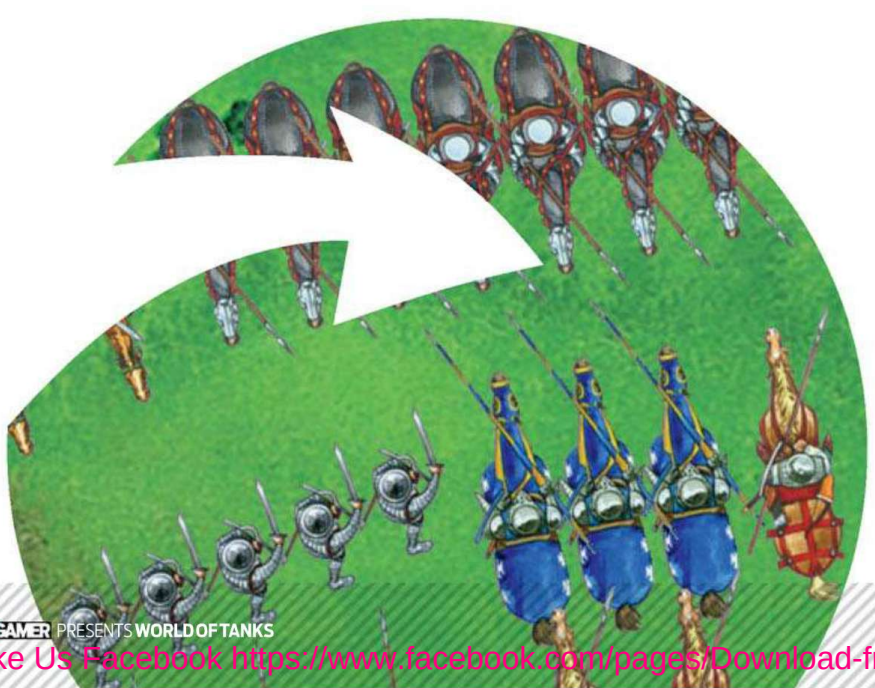
Kislyi is more than happy to reminisce about their humble origins. For him, Kasparov's defeat was the first sign that computers were the future. It wasn't long before he and his brother were making their first game. It was called *Iron Age*, a turn-based strategy game influenced by Risk and *Civilization*. Players could forge secret alliances and command individual units to take territory on a hexagonal grid. The brothers set up a server that would take each player's move, convert it, and send it on to other players in the game as an email attachment. Kislyi describes it as "probably the smallest MMO ever".

Only four people played *Iron Age*, including Viktor and his brother. It took two years to build, made no money, and faded fast. "That game lost 50 per cent of its players," Kislyi recalls. "My brother and the German guy stopped playing."

The fourth player, Peter, did keep playing. Years later he would join the company as one of the main creative forces behind *World of Tanks*.

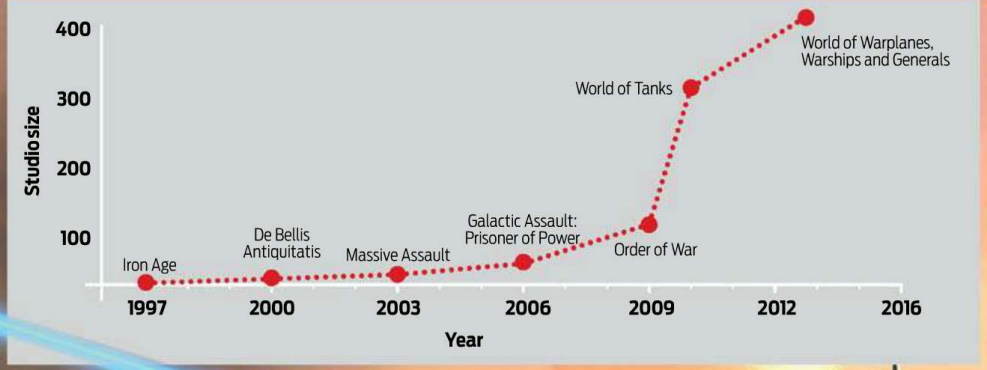
After that, Kislyi took time out from university and travelled across the Atlantic to wash dishes, make beds and "touch the American dream". There, an acquaintance of one of the *Iron Age* players put him in touch with the miniature wargaming community in the US. It was the start of a relationship that would shape the company over the ensuing decade, and eventually become an important factor in *World of Tanks*' success.

Throughout Kislyi's formative years, wargaming proved to be a satisfying alternative to chess. He recalls his first experience with tabletop gaming when, aged ten, he sketched a battlefield on the linoleum floor of his family's new apartment. "I drew a river, I drew a hill, I did a couple of roads and bridges. I cut little square pieces representing soldiers. ▸



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TIMELINE Wargaming's journey from *Iron Age* to modern age



"Wargaming are bigger than ever, but it took a decade of hard lessons before they struck gold"

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I remember that watermelon seeds were the cavalry." He used the board to battle his brother, inventing simple rules as he went along.

Kislyi discovered a shared passion among wargamers and history enthusiasts based all over the world, in the US, New Zealand, Australia, the UK and Russia. Their love of strategy and penchant for intricate historical accuracy became a part of Wargaming's historical titles, and formed the bedrock of their first profitable game, *De Bellis Antiquitatis*.

DBA provided a digital alternative to the turn-based tabletop game of the same name. Back in Minsk, Kislyi recruited a few friends to help put the game together. Working from bedrooms and university dormitories, the game took half a dozen programmers, artists and web designers two years to finish, but earned a following of thousands when it launched in 2000. It was Kislyi's first taste of success.

"The community who played that tabletop game, they pretty much switched to online big time," says Kislyi. Players could pay a subscription fee to gain access to all 220 carefully modelled armies, and could set up international multiplayer games to play enthusiasts across the world. Improved server software meant they no longer needed to send out individual emails for every completed turn.

Wargaming was small but profitable, and starting to amass some technical experience. The monthly subscription money provided enough support for the team to expand again. Soon, they had a team of twelve, and were extremely eager to break into the mainstream.

It wasn't easy. Viktor remembers the dilemma the studio faced after the release of *DBA*. Hardcore military strategy had too small a following to keep the company growing, but they didn't want to abandon the complexity and depth of the turn-based strategy they loved. "Everybody likes the words 'mass market', but how do you do that?" asks Kislyi. "If you do it too mass market, appealing to everyone, there is no distinction for anyone. If you do it too niche, too hardcore, then just a small bunch of people play it."

Have a cigar

Wargaming's solution? Giant robots. Historical accuracy went out of the window. Traditional units of war were replaced with tanks, battleships, giant walkers and futuristic artillery. The result was the 2003 turn-based strategy game *Massive Assault*. It combined the scale and hexagonal grids of *Iron Age* with a more marketable far-future setting, and offered the studio their first experience of developing in a 3D engine. They never looked back.

Massive Assault gave the studio its first taste of critical acclaim, and things got serious fast. Seasoned strategy publishers Matrix Games carried boxed copies in the US and Europe. Kislyi started attending events like E3 and GDC, and the studio did deals with advertisers and publishers. *Massive Assault* was Wargaming's introduction to the industry. They adapted quickly, learning lessons about the intricacies of publisher negotiations, contracts and advertising deals.

> "They didn't want to abandon the complexity and depth of the turn-based strategy they loved"



Armed with business experience, and a new-found sense of pragmatism, Wargaming turned their attention to a bigger problem. Audience interest in turn-based strategy games was dwindling. They followed up on *Massive Assault* with *Massive Assault Network*, *Massive Assault: Domination* and *Massive Assault Network 2*, before adapting Russian novel Prisoners of Power into *Galactic Assault* in 2006, but the profits weren't as high as the company needed them to be.

At this stage, Wargaming consisted of around 35 staff working out of a rented apartment in Minsk. They propped up long, dry development periods with the occasional publisher advance and contract work, developing accounting software and databases on the side to stay afloat. PC sales charts were full of big new titles like *Medieval II: Total War* and *Company of Heroes*. It was time for Wargaming to pull off their next big switch-up. They spent

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WAR STORY Five things that made *World of Tanks* a success

1 *Company of Heroes*
Relic's sensational RTS made Wargaming realise the value of building a community to support and improve the game. Community support is the studio's largest department.

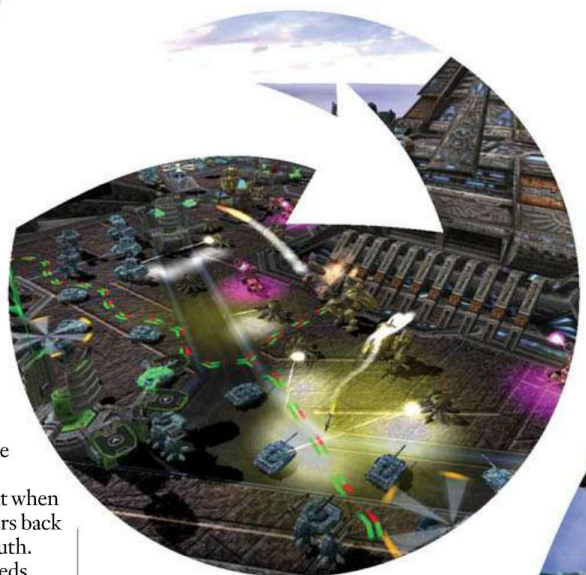
2 Mother Russia
The studio's reputation and Russia's huge reserve of tank enthusiasts gave *World of Tanks* the boost it needed to get off the ground.



3 *Navy Field*
The detailed but dated battleships sim showed that World War II games could be complex and popular, and work on a free-to-play model.

4 Retail vs digital
Failing shop sales made the move online a certainty. Not having to support a boxed business encouraged Wargaming to self-publish.

5 Old friends
CEO Viktor Kislyi considers the studio's ability to hold onto staff as its greatest asset. Wargaming veterans were integral in the inception of the idea of *World of Tanks*.



the next three years developing *Order of War*, which would be Wargaming's first and last real-time strategy title.

Kislyi still buzzes with excitement when he talks about *Order of War*. He refers back to the linoleum battlefield of his youth. "Those hundreds of watermelon seeds were always on my mind," he says, "so I wanted to do things on a big scale. In *Order of War* you see hundreds and up to thousands of infantry, tanks and planes moving across the battlefields.

"We made a Normandy invasion scene to rival Steven Spielberg's opening scene from Saving Private Ryan for number of troops. And it definitely outnumbered *Company of Heroes*," he adds.

Kislyi brings up *Company of Heroes* several times. The studio had changed tack and spent years developing a new series from scratch in an unfamiliar genre, only to crash up against the best World War II RTS ever made. *Order of War* offered battles on a scale that *Company of Heroes* couldn't match, but Relic's RTS had already had years to establish itself, and Wargaming struggled to persuade players to even take a look at their game.

"What we learned – and it was a bitter, bitter lesson – was community. *Company of Heroes*, without even knowing about our existence, flicked us on the nose."

It's a sore point for Kislyi, but would turn out to be an important lesson for Wargaming. They realised that passionate players were a powerful asset. They could give insightful feedback on a game, they could defend it on forums, attack competitors and spread the word across the internet. They were testers, bug fixers, warriors and evangelists. Building a following during development would become a priority for Wargaming during work on *World of Tanks*.

Order of War didn't sell well, but sales were down for everyone. The market was changing. Digital distribution services like Steam were well established, and retail sales were fading fast. For Kislyi, 2007 was the year that the boxed PC games market died. He doesn't miss it, not even a little bit. He sees game stores as anachronistic relics rooted in the habits of centuries of human trade, rendered irrelevant by the onset of the digital age. "Every aspect of boxed business is bad," he argues. "It's a new world, those days are gone." Wargaming had one key new rule: "No more boxes."

Falling retail sales wasn't the only indication that the market was on the move. Chinese and Korean free-to-play titles were migrating westwards through Russia. From their HQ in Belarus, ▸

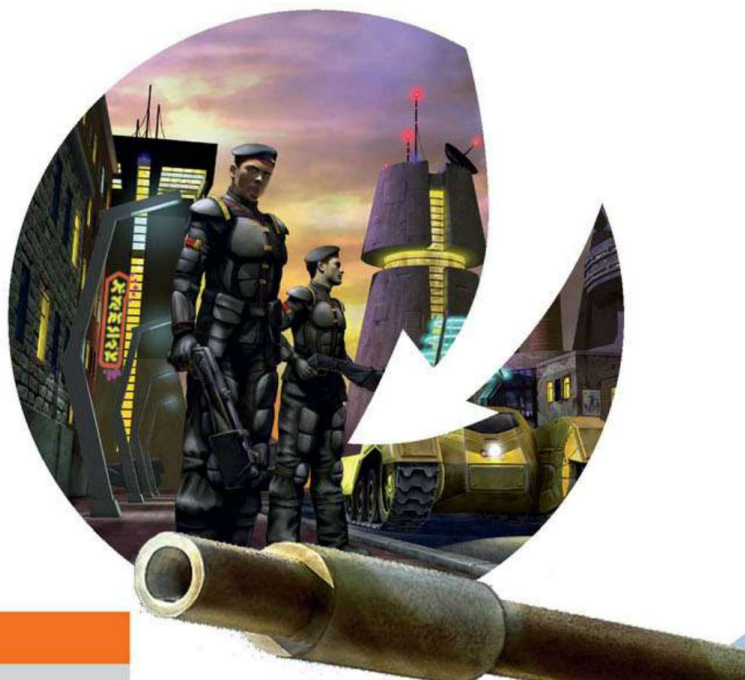


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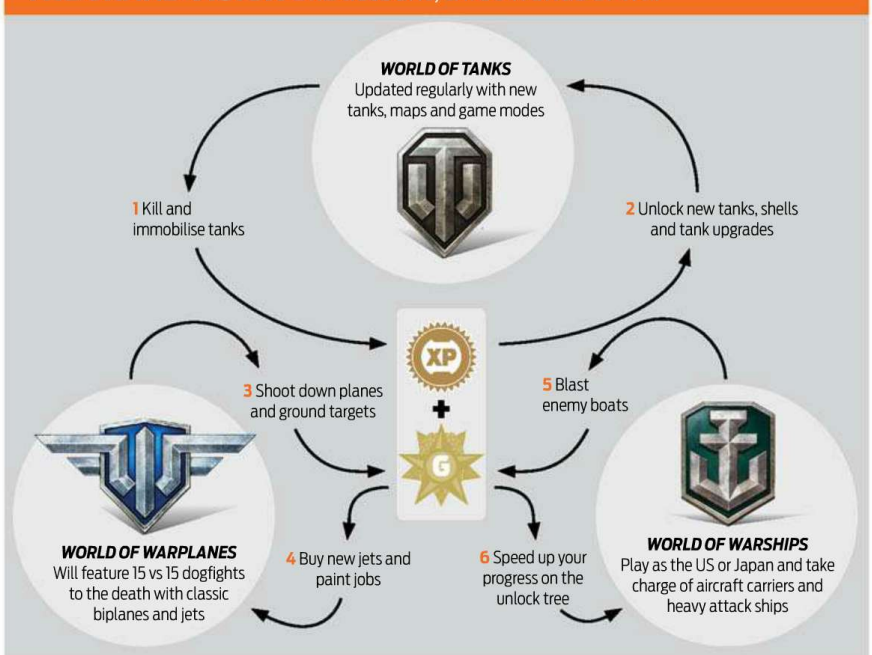








THE GRAND VISION One account, three worlds of war





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Wargaming had strong ties to the Russian market and, thanks to *Massive Assault*, was a known name among Russian gamers. The studio had 80 employees with more than a decade of experience in game development and server infrastructure, but the turn-based strategy audience had moved on to faster strategy titles with bigger budgets, and Wargaming's first RTS had faltered. It was about time for another switch-up; their next game would be an MMO.

The game that would eventually become *World of Tanks* existed for four months as a "fantasy arena style battle game". *World of Warcraft*'s extraordinary success had convinced many developers and publishers that only a fantasy setting could work in MMOs.

Things could have turned out very differently if not for the intervention of an old friend of Wargaming, Peter – one of the four people in the world who had played the Kislyi brothers' first game, *Iron Age*. He introduced Viktor to *Navy Field*, an ageing 2D isometric tactical warship game with a devoted following in Russia. Viktor was inspired. "It was historical, it was authentic and, most importantly, it had that free-to-play model."

Everything came together in a meeting of old friends and colleagues in an apartment in Moscow. Viktor and Peter were there, along with the man that would become the lead producer of *World of Tanks*, Sergei Burkatovsky. Before taking the lift to the top floor of Wargaming towers to meet Kislyi, I spoke to Burkatovsky about that vital evening.

"We started brainstorming and understood that the market was oversaturated with these MMO fantasy titles," he said. We understood that we knew nothing about fantasy games, but having released *Order of War*, we had accumulated lots of guys expert at doing tanks. So this is how the idea came about.

"Why should we do something with a thing we don't know anything about? We should make an MMO with the tanks we know *everything* about."

"Wargaming had their big idea – an online free-to-play arena shooter"

The big idea

It was a simple revelation, but the game that emerged from that meeting would be huge. Wargaming now had their big idea, an online free-to-play arena shooter that was accessible but tough. They would pack it with the sumptuous historical detail that *Order of War* fans enjoyed and apply the tactical nous learned from building *Iron Age* and *DBA* to each tank's workings. Every vehicle would have its strengths and weaknesses inspired by historical design. Every shell impact would take into account the qualities of the barrel that fired it, and the style and thickness of the armour it struck. It would have depth and big, satisfying explosions. It would be easy to learn and difficult to master, like chess – except better, because it would be full of tanks.

Certain that they were on to something, Wargaming travelled the world trying to sell the idea to publishers, but they were met with uncertainty and, as Sergei explained, outright incredulity.

"They were literally laughing at us. One of the top managers of the biggest Russian company told us that it would never, ever be any kind of success because the person playing an MMO simply cannot associate himself or herself with the tank. It is just ▸



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not possible." Viktor finds this point especially amusing. "We were pretty much lucky because we now know scientifically and can prove that boys like tanks in pretty much the same manner across the world."

Wargaming bravely decided to bypass publishers altogether and press on alone. They began in Russia, a nation arguably sculpted by the vast tank battles of the Eastern Front. Wargaming got in touch with historical societies and wargaming enthusiasts, returning to the same circles that Kislyi had mingled with a decade earlier while making *DBA*. They were determined to build the sort of community that had made *Company of Heroes* unbeatable. They succeeded.

Word of mouth spread fast and soon Wargaming found themselves swamped by thousands of players. Their technical engineers were working backbreaking night shifts, powering up emergency servers to keep up with demand.

They invested heavily in server infrastructure and community support, in order to retain the player base they had rapidly amassed. They made regular updates to the game. They added new tanks, new maps, and communicated closely with fans on forums.

Record breaker

In January 2011, *World of Tanks*' Russian server won a Guinness World Record for hosting the highest number of consecutive players in an MMO, when players on the game's Russian server totalled 91,311. Wargaming didn't stop there, though. They opened offices in Europe and released *World of Tanks* in China.

In April 2012, *World of Tanks* broke its own Guinness World Record, registering more than 105,000 players online at the same time. Kislyi estimates that around 13 million people have signed up to try *World of Tanks* worldwide. Later that year, it scooped the Best MMO prize in the annual Golden Joystick Awards, registering over two million unique votes – yet more proof of the game's rapidly burgeoning popularity across the globe.

Kislyi certainly isn't about to relax, but that's understandable – after all, Wargaming haven't stood still for 12 years. *World of Tanks* is just the beginning of a trilogy of titles. *World of Warplanes* is well into development, and *World of Warships* lurks on the horizon.

Wargaming are building a detailed world of war, and Kislyi is as excited and confident as ever about the company's prospects in the years to come. "We can perform miracles with the people we have," he says. "It's very exciting." ■

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New tanks produced

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Vehicles wrecked

500,000+
Facebook followers

Content Patches

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Tech tree analysis



1 VICKERS

Playing with the Vickers tanks is a neat way to sharpen your battlefield awareness. All three medium tanks are kitted out in near-nonexistent armour: the kind of protection a stray breeze would penetrate, let alone an enemy shell. Drivers need to stay constantly aware of their surroundings: get jumped and you die. Conversely, jump someone else and you'll have a good chance for a kill: the Vickers' guns are excellent for their respective tiers – as long as you can stay alive long enough to use them.

2 CRUISERS



The four Cruiser tanks on can feel more like heavy tanks than lights. First comes the Mk.I – a slow light tank with terrible armour, but a powerful gun. That leads to the Cruiser Mk.II. From there, the line splits: players who enjoy the Cruiser's punch and don't mind the tank's slow pace should probably move onto the Valentine, and later, the Churchill. Meanwhile, people who want their light tanks lighter should unlock Cruisers Mk.III and IV, then opt for the speedy Covenanter.

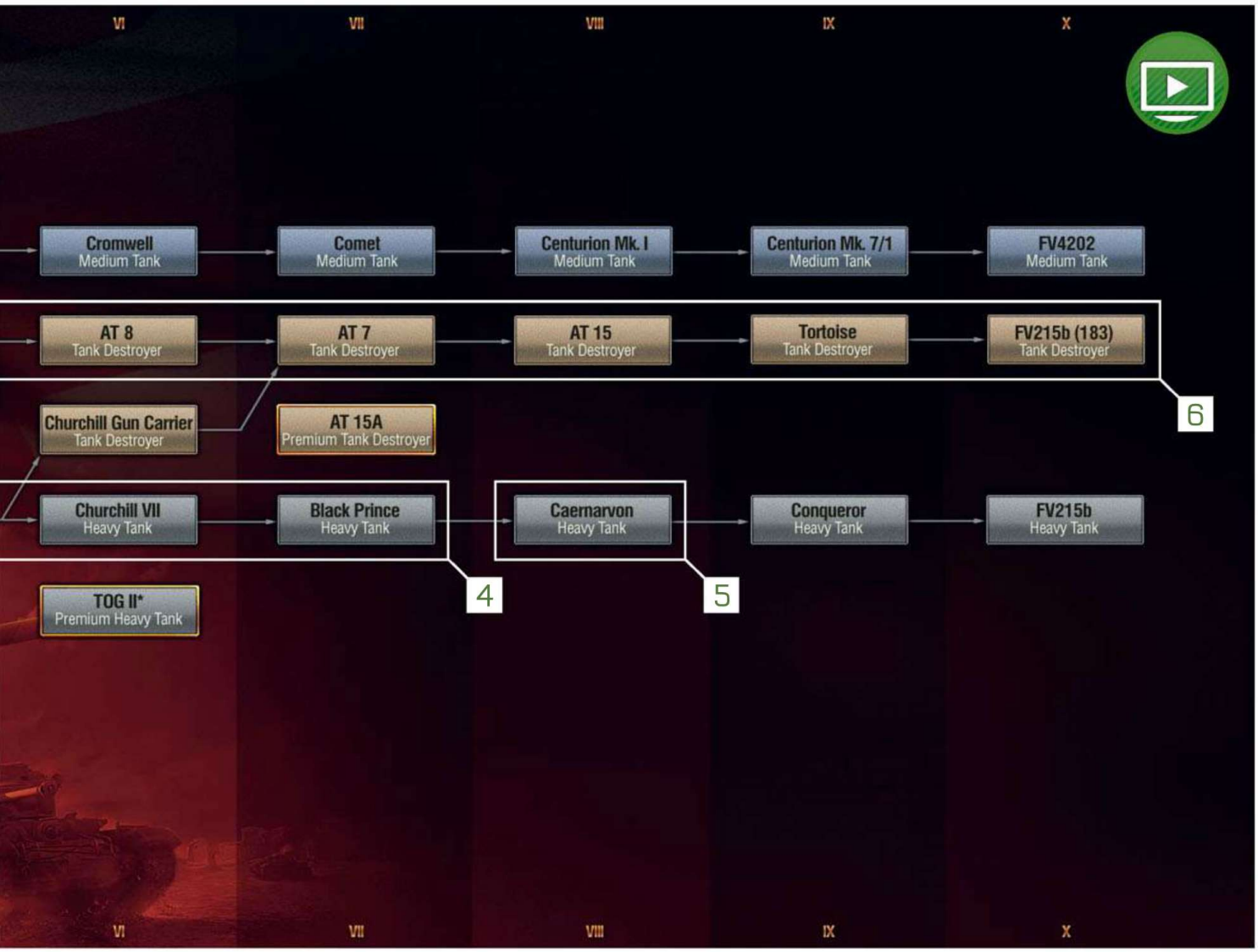
3 ALECTO

In keeping with the British tanks' disdain for any kind of armour, early tier tank destroyers feel like they're coated in papier mache. But again, as with their tankier brethren, these machines wield powerful cannons. The Alecto is a fantastic steed: it's quick, small enough to dodge incoming shots and wields a gun powerful enough to put its similarly-tiered peers down in one or two shots. A clever Alecto driver is a thorn in the enemy's side, whizzing past battle lines to punch holes in tank rears.

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BRITAIN

Tanks from Blighty require careful management. They're slow-moving monsters, but their size doesn't bring best-in-class armour. Instead, British tanks pack a weaponry wallop, boasting powerful cannons and the ability to finish enemies off in a few short salvos.



4 C'HILL I & VII, BLACK PRINCE

Driving all three of these medium tanks – the Churchill I and VII, and the Black Prince – will feel like driving an uncooperative shopping trolley through treacle. But what these three tanks (sorely) lack in pace, they more than make up for in damage output. They all come toting powerful cannons and thick frontal armour, making them ideal for rumbling up the middle of a map as nimbler tanks tease foes out into the open. Just be sure to avoid being flanked, as their rear armour is much weaker.

5 CAERNARVON

It follows on from the sluggish Black Prince, but the Caenarvon is a complete departure, both in terms of design – it loses the ridges distinctive to the Churchill I and VII and Black Prince – and in play-style. Where the Black Prince's armour allows it to be a battering ram, the Caernarvon's lack of protection necessitates a cautious approach to combat, using cover and its accurate gun to hit targets at mid-distance and retreat quickly thanks to a solid top speed.



6 AT 15

British TDs flip characteristics half-way along the tech tree. Before tier V, they're all speedy creatures with hard-hitting cannons; after, they're heavily-armoured, slow-moving monstrosities with accurate, fast-firing but comparatively low-damage weapons. The AT 15 provides the best example of this change in philosophy, the tier VIII tank destroyer carries a quick-firing, super accurate cannon managing mid-table damage, protected by seriously tough armour all around its sizeable hull.

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Beginner's guide



GETTING STARTED IN WORLD OF TANKS

Everything you need to know to start crushing your enemies.

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The *World of Tanks* environment can be a daunting one for fresh commanders. Wargaming's title is deep and difficult to master, demanding a combination of battlefield experience and statistical nous, sprinkled lightly with some historical context and old-fashioned twitch-aiming skill. The best tankers are often wily veterans of many a battle, with a symbiotic tank-human relationship and complete understanding of the surrounding terrain, but you don't have to put in thousands of hours to compete on the field.

Let us take you through some of *World of Tanks*' basic ideas, demystifying the more complex concepts and giving you a sense of what you should be worrying about, and what you can work towards unlocking and mastering. We can't stop the opposition lobbing shells at you from behind that farmhouse, but we *can* help you work out how to start fighting back.

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Beginner's guide



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YOUR GARAGE

On logging into your *World of Tanks* account, you'll be presented with the Garage screen. This is where your tanks are stored when you're not forcing men inside them and barrelling them round the carnage-crammed battlefields of the mid-20th century, and where you'll conduct both upgrades and repairs on your vehicles.

It's something of a daunting set of menus for the first-time player, but you'll soon be skipping between panes with practised ease as you get used to both your tank and your loadout. You'll be wanting to focus on a handful of tanks at a time when you're starting out, and selling lower tier vehicles that you didn't quite click with along the way. New players will want to pay particular attention to the research, tech tree and battle options.

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Beginner's guide

YOUR GARAGE EXPLAINED



1 CREW

Each of your tank's crew members has a different role. Commanders spot enemy vehicles, gunners aim and fire, loaders reload shells, radio operators keep in contact with allies and drivers – guess what – drive. Not all tanks have enough space to house a separate man for each job. Taking crew to battle, or paying either credits or gold, will increase your crew's experience, from a default level of 50-100%. At 100%, crew members can choose perks that make your tank run smoother.







2 CURRENCY

A premium account A will ensure you get more experience and research points after a match. Premium accounts can be bought with gold – ie real-world cash – and last up to a year. Also of note is free experience. B Using a tank in battle earns experience that lets you unlock components for that tank only, as well as a smaller pool of free experience C you can use to research any tank. Pay gold, and you can convert that tank-specific experience into free experience – which is an ideal way to upgrade a high-tier tank without having to grind through matches.



3 TANKS

These are your tanks. New players start off with a handful of vehicles: mainly fast-moving light tanks, with a beefier medium machine thrown in. Tanks come in three flavours, light, medium and heavy, and are joined in the garage by self-propelled guns – essentially an artillery piece welded to some tank tracks – and powerful but flimsy tank destroyers. Use the menu filters in the bottom left A to specify which tanks you want to sift through when choosing one for battle.

You can also filter by tank tier. Battles are organised loosely by tier: you'll see tier VI tanks fighting tier VII tanks, for example, but you fortunately won't have your tiny tier I light tank matched against an advanced tier IX monster. Extra slots B to house your tanks can be bought with gold; extra tanks themselves can be bought with in-game credits, or – in the case of special premium tanks – gold.



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4 UPGRADES, AMMO AND CONSUMABLES

This bar shows your tank's components, upgrades and consumables. The boxes on the left A detail your current configuration of gun, turret, engine, suspension and radio. These are researched via the tech tree and then unlocked with credits. Like the tanks themselves, these components have tiers attached to them, and you'll need to have researched their predecessors in the tech tree before you get access to the tank's top-tier parts. The German PzKfpw IV, for example, has five different guns to unlock, one of which can be placed on its turret. To house the fifth, you'll need to research a new turret capable of withstanding the force of the recoil.

Higher tier equipment – the tier V 10.5cm gun on the PzKfpw IV instead of the default tier IV 7.5cm gun, for example – tends to be better, but seasoned veterans can find configurations that they prefer with lower tier components. One other thing to bear in mind is that the better your tank's bits, the higher tier your opponents are likely to be.

To the right of your tank's components, you'll find equipment. B By default these three slots are empty, but credits will let you buy and install straight upgrades to your favoured vehicle. These upgrades range from better suspension through to a 25% increase to repair speed, and cost large chunks of credits to install – the top-end bits of equipment are 500,000 silver. Stripping them off is expensive, too: if you want to keep the equipment to fit on another tank, it'll cost you real-world money in gold.

Further right, you'll find ammunition C and consumables. D These can be switched in and out before matches,



depending on your tank's loadout and the kind of role you fancy playing. It's often worth packing a repair kit to back yourself out of at least one sticky situation, and medkits are key to running a happy, healthy tank crew. Scouts or other speedsters might prefer to go for lend-lease oil over a fire extinguisher, letting them gun the engine for an increased top speed. As you can see, the tactical possibilities are complex – there's real depth to the action.

5 REPAIRS AND COSMETICS

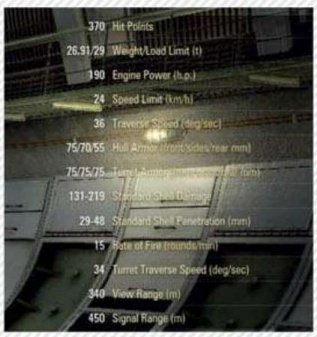
You'll need to repair and rearm your tank between battles using credits. For lower-tier tanks it's cheap; higher tier vehicles cost more. You can also buy camouflage and decals in the Exterior menu. Camouflage is for poseurs, decals even more so, letting you christen your 40-tonne cannon-wielding steed 'Lotti'.





6 MODES AND MENUS

Choose Battle to get right into a fight. The other options on this top bar let you buy or tweak a tank. Depot shows you the tanks, modules and disposable items – like ammunition – you have at your disposal. Store allows you to buy new tanks and items. Service Record details your achievements and successes in your tanks of choice. The Tech Tree shows which tanks become available as you progress in your research and purchases, while the Barracks menu allows you inspect your crew and choose their perks. Don't forget to remove your crew from their vehicle before selling it on (for 50% of its value): when you do, they'll decamp to barracks, ready to be reassigned to a new tank.



7 STATS

Quickly compare tanks using the stats squirrelled away in the top right corner of the Garage screen, and choose the right machine for your preferred role. Light tanks are good scouts: you'll want them to be fast, with powerful engines and nippy acceleration. Heavy tanks should be able to take a serious pounding – check hull armour – and dish it out, meaning you'll want high shell damage and penetration.

Medium tanks can adapt to a variety of roles: check a new vehicle's stats before you take the purchasing plunge and compare it with similarly tiered tanks. Tank destroyers are similar to tanks themselves, but with much weaker armour and (usually) a gun fixed in place, meaning you'll have to move the entire machine to get a fix on a target. Self-propelled guns are similar, but can fire further. Key among their stats is rate of fire and shell damage.

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Beginner's guide



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BATTLE SCREEN

Choose to play a battle and you'll be placed in a pool of similarly-tiered tanks and matched up against an enemy team. By default you've got a third-person view of your own vehicle, but the mouse-wheel also handily allows you to zoom in to a first-person 'gunner's eye' view of the battlefield – a must when lining up accurate, potentially devastating shots.

It sounds obvious but remember to scan the environment constantly, watch for telltale silhouettes on the horizon and think about terrain before moving through or over it. Will you expose your weak underbelly when cresting that ridge? What's behind that farmhouse? And why does that bush have a three metre-long cannon sticking out of it? Learn to assess dangerous situations and adapt to them on the fly during the battle.

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Beginner's guide

BATTLE SCREEN EXPLAINED



1 YOUR TEAM

Voice communication with your team is ideal, but if you're playing public games, try to operate with your side rather than playing as a lone wolf. Concentrate your fire on targets already picked out by teammates to take them down faster.





2 HUD

Your HUD shows your tank's speed A and remaining hit points. B Specific parts of tanks can be knocked out of action with a well-placed shot. Your HUD and crew will indicate when something's broken – from there, you can either spend a repair consumable to fix it or wait as your men tinker with the problem. For something like your gun's rangefinder, that's less of a problem; if your track's destroyed, it means you're stuck in place for a period of time – a gigantic man-filled sitting duck.

In addition to mechanical parts, your crew can also be injured or killed by accurate shots, slowing down the process they're associated with. A tank with a dead loader, C for example, will reload more slowly – unless the loader is revived with a single-use medkit.

3 OPPONENTS

In multi-tank fights, focus on weakened targets first. If you're jumped by a tank at 20% health and one at 100%, one shot to the one on 20% could half the incoming fire, buying you precious time to scoot out of immediate danger.



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4 AMMUNITION AND CONSUMABLES

Tanks can use a variety of ammunition types, and most can change them on the field. There are two main types: armour-piercing and high explosive, both of which come in varying sizes and types.

Armour-piercing shells A have a greater chance of punching through tank armour, but do statistically less damage than high explosive shells; those in turn have a greater chance of killing crew, but are more likely to bounce off armour. As a basic rule of thumb, armour-piercing shells should be used against tanks of your own tier and higher, while high explosive shells B will do more damage to lower-tier tanks. There are exceptions: regular flankers might find they do well loading high explosive rounds early as they're firing on the exposed, thin rears of enemies.

Self-propelled guns tend to take high explosive shells as standard, so they can pepper the battlefield with clouds of superheated shrapnel rather than having to hit moving targets from extreme range. Many SPGs pack HEAT ammo – high explosive anti-tank rounds – that go deeper into enemy armour than standard HE fare.

You'll also find consumables on this bar, activated via the number keys C. Fire extinguishers come in handy for dousing a burning tank, a medkit will heal a downed crew member, and a repair kit fixes a busted component immediately. Other variants are available from the store but each can only be used once.

5 RETICULE

The smaller your tank's aiming reticule when you fire, the more accurate the resulting shot will be. It makes sense to come to a full stop before firing – this will slowly shrink your reticule as your crew cues up the target. Don't bother using the auto-aim option: manual shots can be used to aim at weak spots and ensure your shells don't bounce off thick frontal armour.





6 MINIMAP

If you're playing a random battle, you'll have a chance of playing one of three game modes. Standard battles have two bases, one for each team. A Assaults have only one base, with a team attacking and one defending, and encounter battles have a base at the centre of the map that both sides fight over. Use the minimap to plan a route and work out whether you should hang back and defend, push on and attack, or sneak around to flank.

Spotted enemies appear here first, B so constantly scan your eyes across the bottom left corner of the screen. Listen out for your team-mates' calls, too: players can request help or fire in certain map grid coordinates. Spend a bit of time before a match memorising these, so you can work out where sector 5D or 9A is on the fly.

7 ENEMIES

Most tanks have their thickest armour in front of their main cannon, with their second-thickest just below it. If attacking front on, aim shots low so they hit the under armour. Try to attack from a perpendicular angle to the side: this reduces the chances of the shot ricocheting off, and increases your chances of hitting the flimsier side, rear and top armour. Also factor in shot travel time: if a tank is motoring, aim in front of it to send your shell punching through it as it moves.



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Interview

DEV TALK



Victor Kislyi
CEO at Wargaming

Why

has the free-to-play model done so enormously well for Wargaming, and what's the secret to getting it right?
We've designed the free-to-play model so that it doesn't give a huge advantage to those paying money. In-game currency can be purchased to repair machines quicker, provide an XP boost or simply make cosmetic changes, like camouflage. It balances out so that a student with little money but lots of time can see and try everything in the game, while a busy businessman can pay and not lag behind those who have more time on their hands.

Is free-to-play the future?
Free-to-play is one future, but not the *only* future. It's a market, and that market is all about choice and variety. Subscription? Sure – there'll be traditional subscriptions in the coming years. Retail boxed games? They won't disappear completely, either. My point is that free-to-play will, eventually, likely become the most popular business model with gamers and publishers alike. Are you charged before you enter a huge mall? No. You walk in paying nothing, look around as long as you please, and dip into your wallet only if you find something you really fancy. That's how I see successful future games. Free to access. Free-to-play. With fancy extra items available for 'real' money.

The next generation of consoles will likely be free-to-play-friendly. Are you considering building any of your games with them in mind?
Yes, this is an opportunity we're certainly looking into. But at this time it's too early to confirm or say anything more at the moment.

After many years developing strategy games, what prompted the shift to a new type of game with *World of Tanks*?
Turn-based and realtime strategy games have been Wargaming's major focus for nearly a decade. At some point it became clear to us that the company had grown


Tanks were a gamble many backers didn't believe would succeed. They were so wrong.

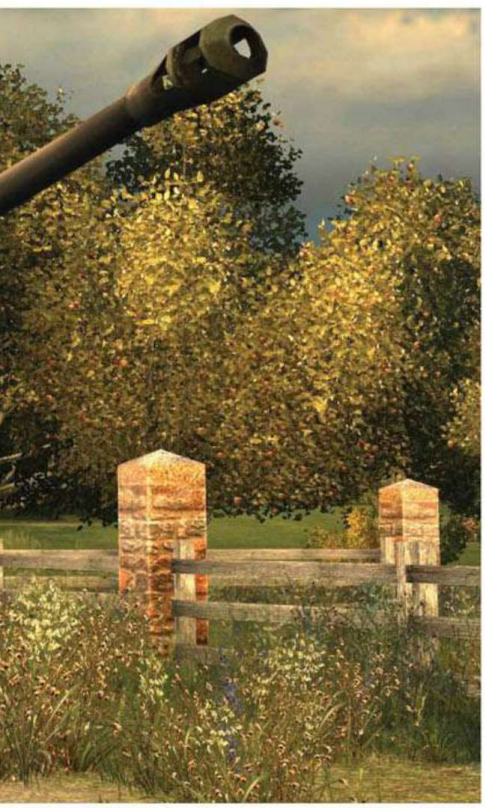
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Wargaming's sky-high ambitions are finally being realised.


Kislyi likes to keep his flying skills sharp.


Wargaming are setting sail to new gaming markets.

out of the genre. With the expertise we'd gathered we were ready to step up and reach higher. Retail sales were low and the digital era was nearing. We took the risk of tapping into the online games market, directing all resources we had to *World of Tanks*, and applied lessons learnt from previous projects to inject the game with maximum depth and polish. The risk of failure was big, but it paid off.



What's Wargaming's finest moment?
Wargaming has made a huge progress recently, so it's hard to pick one event. Securing the Guinness World Record (for Most Players Online Simultaneously on One MMO Server), for example, was a huge milestone. Receiving the Golden Joystick for 'Best MMO' last year was another moment to remember.

What's been the biggest challenge?
Entering South-East Asia wasn't easy. Cultural differences, traditions, tricky moments in the state laws... we chose to go into the new market gingerly, taking one step at a time. First, we operated our projects through a local publisher, SEA Gaming. It allowed us look into the local marketing cycle and learn major traps without getting into them. As soon as we acquired the necessary expertise, we set up a direct presence in the region.


The latest instalment – *World of Warships* – brings the battle to the seas.

> **"The free-to-play model is certainly one future, but it's not the only future"**

Are you concerned about *World of Warplanes* succeeding in the shadow of *World of Tanks*?
Of course, *World of Tanks*' success creates extra pressure for the *World of Warplanes* dev team. The game will inevitably be compared with its predecessor; I wouldn't call it a totally bad thing, though. Success exposed us to bigger audiences, while the ever-higher bar of expectations spurs us to try even harder.

Why did you decide to rescue Gas Powered Games?
To keep making great games in the legacy of *Supreme Commander* and *Dungeon Siege*, this time within Wargaming.

What are Gas Powered working on now?
I can't reveal anything yet – you will learn some juicy details soon!

What games have you enjoyed recently?
I often log into *World of Warplanes* to see for myself how it's shaping up and to master my skills. I'm also a die-hard fan of the classic *Civilization* series.

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Top 10

LIGHT TANKS



10 VK 2801

Overview

Best at
Scouting. Blast past enemy lines and score lucky shots on rear armour. The VK 2801's gun is potent when loaded with HE rounds.

Worst at
The VK 2801's guns are weak and inaccurate over distance. Break through enemy ranks and fire on exposed tank behinds.

In *World of Tanks*, the VK 2801 – it never earned a 'proper' name beyond its numerical designation – is a light tank, and one of the best scouts available. It's larger than the German Leopard, and that size affords it extra armour that slopes in a convenient manner: any enemies you can't outrun – and you can outrun most in the VK 2801 – have a chance of having their shots ricochet harmlessly off your speedy charge. does that bush have a three metre-long cannon sticking out of it? Learn to assess dangerous situations and adapt to them on the fly during the fight.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 5 ◆ **Hit Points** 550 ◆ **Speed Limit** 60 km/h ◆ **Tier** VI ◆ **Cost** 705,000

9 PZ2 AUSF G

Overview

Best at
Scouting. High top speed and a good basic radio mean the AUSF G can relay enemy positions back to your pals.

Worst at
Agility. Most of the AUSF G's speed is lost when the tank turns, meaning it's an easy target during complex manoeuvres.

This low-slung boxy beauty can really get up a head of steam on straights, reaching a hefty 65 km/h on downhill roads. It makes a good scout, with a powerful enough gun to punch through weak points in an enemy line and high enough acceleration that it can zoom out of immediate trouble. But stick to straight line courses: the AUSF G bleeds off most of its high speed when turning, making it a slowly rotating duck for attentive tank destroyers who hang around at the back of maps.



DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 3 ◆ **Hit Points** 220 ◆ **Speed Limit** 65 km/h ◆ **Tier** III ◆ **Cost** 39,700

8 WZ 132

Overview

Best at
Scouting. The WZ 132 is one of the few high tier light tanks, and can get behind enemy lines.

Worst at
Other tier VIII guns will tear the WZ 132 up, and it's prone to multiple module failure when it takes a hit.

A light tank capable of dancing its way through tier VIII medium and heavies. Its status makes it great for sniffing out against tier VIII big boys, but it can also dish damage in a scrap. It's not a good idea to take it toe-to-toe, but where some scouts are better off holding their fire lest their opponents flick their armour and blow them up, the WZ 132 should take mid to long range potshots at targets it identifies for its friends.



DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 4 ◆ **Hit Points** 520 ◆ **Speed Limit** 64 km/h ◆ **Tier** VIII ◆ **Cost** 2,400,000

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7 M24 Chaffee

Overview

Best at
Hit and run. The Chaffee's gun is powerful enough to take down anything else in tier V, and fires quickly.

Worst at
Armour. Can take a few hits, but will be knocked out if trading blows with a medium or heavy machine.

The snub-nosed Chaffee comes at a sweet spot in *World of Tanks*' tier system. Rated as a tier V machine, the machines it's put up against aren't quite beefy enough to dominate it in a stand-up slugfest, meaning it has greater survivability than many of the other scout-focused tanks on this page. It helps that the Chaffee's gun packs a serious wallop: it's able to make a siezable dent in almost everything it encounters, plus a speedy reload time means any shots that do ricochet off can be lined up and tried again before your enemy wooshes out of range.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 5 ◆ **Hit Points** 300 ◆ **Speed Limit** 56 km/h ◆ **Tier** V ◆ **Cost** 687,550



6 Cruiser Mk. II

Overview

Best at
Close quarter assaults. The 3.7 inch howitzer is lethal at short range, and should be your research priority.

Worst at
Sniping. The Cruiser Mk. II can be outfitted with a standard 40mm cannon, but its terrible accuracy means it's a bad idea.

Four of the British light tanks are based around the established Cruiser model. This one comes confusingly after the tier II Cruiser Mk. III in the tech tree. It's not tough or quick, but is remarkable for its ability to use the 3.7 Howitzer cannon. At the tiers the Mk. II operates in, the howitzer shreds enemies at close range, making it sensible for drivers to take their tank into *World of Tanks*' many villages and lie in wait, punching enemies who stray too close with a devastating blast. Treat the Mk. II like a 15 ton shotgun and you'll have a decent piece of armour in your ranks.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 5 ◆ **Hit Points** 120 ◆ **Speed Limit** 40 km/h ◆ **Tier** III ◆ **Cost** 31,000



Type 2597

Overview

Best at
Penetration. The 47mm top gun can punch through chunky armour, giving this plucky underdog a chance against some tier Vs.

Worst at
Scouting. Poor acceleration and mediocre handling do not a good point tank make.

The Type 2597 Chi-Ha is technically a Japanese tank, produced by Mitsubishi during the Second World War. Here wearing the colours of the Chinese army, it's a light tank lacking the pace of its peers. It's no dedicated scout, a 40 km/h top speed hard to reach on all but the straightest roads.

Instead, it functions well as a support vehicle, ideal for putting the boot to damaged enemies with a comparatively powerful cannon providing good penetration against tanks of its tier. Higher tier tanks provide the Chi-Ha with more trouble, especially when its boxy profile can make it more obvious in the undergrowth than its light tank peers. Against these scarier foes, hang back and use the Chi-Ha's high radio range to call in targets for friends.



DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 4 ◆ **Hit Points** 170 ◆ **Speed Limit** 40 km/h ◆ **Tier** III ◆ **Cost** 42,000

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Top 10



4 AMX 13 90

Overview

Best at
Flanking. Use the AMX 13 90's speed to keep tabs on firefights, and join them from convenient angles to help your team.

Worst at
Armour. The AMX 13 90 is a light tank in a tier populated by heavies. Try to avoid taking fire when possible.

The French AMX 13 90 comes complete with an auto-loader. This means its shells are loaded in a magazine, rather than individually, allowing players to fire off a clip in a short space of time. This facet – coupled with the AMX 13 90's high firepower – means this speedy tier VIII French light tank can put the hurting on an opponent in a very short window. AMX 13 90 drivers will need to be sure-handed, though: miss your shots and allow your enemy a shot back at your lightly armoured glass cannon, and you'll be history. You have been warned.



DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 3 ◆ **Hit Points** 250 ◆ **Speed Limit** 64 km/h ◆ **Tier** VIII ◆ **Cost** 2,370,000

3+ Leichttraktor

Overview

Best at
Damage. The Leichttraktor is powerful in comparison with its tier I light tank brethren, and its cannons fire fast.

Worst at
Armour: Two big hatches in the front of the tank are easy targets for enemies. A good shot will kill your crew quickly.

The Leichttraktor is provided free for all players as a stepping stone vehicle. It's a small, dumpy vehicle with a turret set further back than most other tanks, making it look a bit like it's holding a belly in. Its biggest weakness is its design, with structural weaknesses at the front, and it's not the fastest, most powerful or toughest tank on the battlefield. But its status as a solid starter – and its name, born from the German army's need to keep their military research and development secret prior to World War II – have given the machine a following, a webcomic, and even a cute nickname: the 'Loltraktor'. Regardless of ribbings, the Leichttraktor remains one of the best vehicles in which to learn *World of Tanks*' ropes.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 3 ◆ **Hit Points** 110 ◆ **Speed Limit** 36 km/h ◆ **Tier** I ◆ **Cost** 0

2 Renault NC-31

Overview

Best at
Armour. The NC-31's armour slopes at an angle, deflecting incoming shells and increasing the tank's survivability.

Worst at
Aiming. The NC-31's gun takes comparatively longer to focus on its target than its tier I peers.

The Chinese NC-31 tank looks notably similar to the French Renault FT. Both are light tier I vehicles, and both are available for free for new *World of Tanks* players - indeed, both share the same chassis. But the NC-31 has the upper hand over the basic FT: it's a more agile tank, with a gun powerful enough to punch through most of its tier I friends' hulls. It's another solid choice for new players, even if it feels like it's likely going to topple over on sharp corners.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 2 ◆ **Hit Points** 100 ◆ **Speed Limit** 25 km/h ◆ **Tier** I ◆ **Cost** 0

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T-50-2

Overview

Best at
Scouting. The T-50-2 is World of Tanks' best scout, boasting good speed and excellent agility.

Worst at
Repair costs. Fixing this tank up between bouts will drain your resources quickly.

The T-50-2 is one of *World of Tanks*' nippiest beasts. The Soviet light tank can reach a staggering 72 km/h top speed: meaning it would've beaten most cars of the same era in a road race.

T-50-2 players make perfect scouts, able to flit around the map at a pace double that of their heavier peers, using the tank's excellent camouflage rating to duck out of trouble whenever spotted, hiding in bushes or behind buildings as they relay information on enemy locations back to their team.

Spotting the enemy is the T-50-2's main job, but its acceptable main gun also means you'll be able to take a few potshots at foes you've picked out before speeding off into the sunset. The T-50-2 is seriously fast – it won't even bleed speed as it turns, and you'll find yourself going airborne often as your skip over hillocks and humps across the map – but you'll want to avoid taking any hits, as the tank's armour is thin in comparison to bulkier tanks of the same tier.

Luckily, the T-50-2's manoeuvrability means quick-thinking drivers can get behind any tank that does manage to get a shot off before it can fire a second. Just be careful to keep your tracks in working order: taking the T-50-2 over jumps can bust its treads quickly.


Be a popular team player and take point in the T-50-2.


High repair costs means getting shot up is pricey.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 5 ◆ **Hit Points** 500 ◆ **Speed Limit** 72 km/h ◆ **Tier** V ◆ **Cost** 725,000

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Famous battle



THE BATTLE AT VILLERS-BOCAGE

Need to know

Who
Germans vs British

When
13 June, 1944

Where
Villers-Bocage, France

The battle at Villers Bocage in June 1944 has gone down in WWII lore as 'Montgomery vs. Wittmann' – where the latter secured a decisive victory. Behind the rose-tinted legend, the truth isn't quite as dazzlingly clear; it nevertheless makes for thrilling reading.

Following the Allied Normandy landings on 6 June, 1944, the combined armies of Britain, Canada and the United States pushed inland. Seizing and controlling key road networks would be paramount to any sustained progress – ergo Caen (to the east) and St Lo (to the west) were identified as key targets.

As the closer and larger city, Caen was named a key D-Day target by General Montgomery, although early attempts to wrestle control from the occupying Nazis met with defeat. Nevertheless, Allied incursions – with the veteran US 1st Infantry Division playing a key role – eventually forced an eight mile gap in the German line. 'Monty' smelled blood.

His plan consisted of sending the celebrated British 7th Armoured Division – nicknamed the 'Desert Rats' – through this crack in the German lines, before encircling Caen from the south-west. Their progress wasn't as rapid as anticipated though, and by 12 June the British forces were still 20 miles short of Caen. Eager to make up for lost time, they pushed into the town of Villers-Bocage on the 13th, a small but potentially vital chokepoint.

Dirty Rats

At 8:30am the lead British vehicles approached the town but encountered no resistance. By 9:00am they had all but passed through Villers-Bocage, having only run across a few isolated German snipers, and arrived near the strategically important 'Hill 213'. The British units (including M5 Stuarts, Cromwells and Sherman Fireflies) following in the lead column of the 22nd Armoured Brigade were informed that they could make temporary camp while the rest of the Division caught up. Relaxed, the Britishers began to brew their morning tea. Unbeknownst to them, the Germans – led by SS Obersturmführer Michael 'The Black Baron' Wittmann – lurked in wait…

Wittmann was commander of the 101st Heavy Tank Battalion of the 1st SS Panzer Division. Experienced, decorated and ruthless, he had over 100 tank kills under his belt before his arrival in Normandy, by way of Belgium. Six Tiger I models were situated in the Caen region under his command, with others strung out along the road from Paris – and struggling to overcome a combination of Allied air attacks and mechanical failures.

Upon his arrival in Villers-Bocage, Wittmann realised the strategic import of both the village and Hill 213, secreting his meagre number of tanks about the area in

THE BATTLE'S KEY TANK

VILLERS-BOCAGE WAS WHERE THE **TIGER I** BARED ITS FANGS

In a lone Tiger, German tank ace Michael Wittmann was able to savage a British column of the 22nd Armoured Brigade using the vehicle's 88mm canon and machine gun. Although reinforcements comprised of Panzer IVs were to save Wittmann's hide, the firepower of his primary tank proved more than a match for the hapless British during those famed initial exchanges.


Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-J14953 / CC-BY-SA



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Squint and you can see Wittman standing in the Tiger marked '205'.

Bundesarchiv, Bild 101I-299-1804-07 / Scheck / CC-BY-SA

key tactical positions. During the early hours of 13 June, the Spearhead Brigade of the 7th Armoured Division moved to secure Hill 213; meanwhile Wittmann – startled by the Allied appearance but able to take advantage of the situation – was able to make *his* move.

Loony Bin

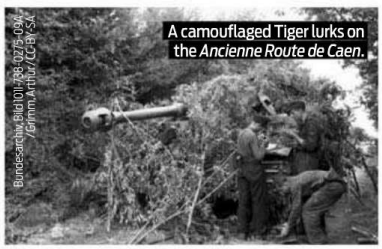
Sending four Tigers to engage the British tanks on the high ground, Wittmann himself took the remaining two Tigers and made for the centre of Villers-Bocage to engage Brigadier William 'Loony' Hinde's 22nd Armoured Brigade group's spearhead. Unbelievably, his lead Tiger broke down – Wittmann simply commandeered the second and pressed on.

As the 101st Heavy Tank Battalion exploded out of cover and tore into the Allied forces, the Desert Rats scrambled back to their machines. Accounts tell of one British tank secreted in a side-street that had a clear shot on the advancing, unawares Wittmann. Sadly for the British the tank's gunner was busy using the toilet. A massacre ensued, with around a dozen Allied tanks ruined.

As British reinforcements moved in from the west, Wittmann called an end to his rampage – only to be ambushed by a lone piece of anti-tank artillery. His Tiger rendered immobile, Wittmann spent the ensuing half an hour repulsing the Allies with his 88mm canon and machine gun, before escaping to the north as the British withdrew. Wittmann returned later that afternoon with 20 Panzer IV's of the Panzer Lehr Division. Later that evening, further Tigers from the 1st SS Panzer Division settled the issue.

Villers-Bocage was to play no further role in the Second Army's Battle for Caen; the town – by then largely a bombed out husk thanks to the Royal Air Force – was eventually liberated on 4 August. The romanticism of Wittmann's ambush and demolition of numerically superior British forces has captured many a tactician's imagination, and while contemporary historians tend to argue his role was overplayed, the statistics are telling: by the end of his action at Villers-Bocage Michael Wittmann had single-handedly knocked out a staggering 10 battle tanks, three light tanks, two anti-tank guns and 13 armoured half-tracks.

Wittmann was later killed in action on 8 August, 1944, during the Anglo-Canadian offensive Operation Totalize. His body was laid to rest in the German cemetery at La Cambe, Normandy.


A camouflaged Tiger lurks on the *Ancienne Route de Caen*.

Bundesarchiv, Bild 101I-298-0275-09A / Grimm, Arthur / CC-BY-SA


A disabled British Cromwell, one of the many tanks destroyed by Wittman.

Bundesarchiv, Bild 101-738-0276-25A / Grimm, Arthur / CC-BY-SA

BATTLE QUOTES

"I surprised the English in the same way that they had surprised us. I first destroyed two on the right and one to the left. Then I turned round to the left to get at the half-tracks in the centre of the regiment and destroyed several armoured vehicles in front of me while on the move. There was unbelievable confusion among the enemy."

OBERSTURMFÜHRER MICHAEL WITTMANN
101ST HEAVY TANK BATTALION

"I never wish to see another tank as long as I live."

LIEUTENANT JOHN CLOUDSLEY-THOMPSON
4TH COUNTY OF LONDON YEOMANRY

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Patches

THEN AND NOW

How *World of Tanks*' many updates have dramatically reshaped its world.

World of Tanks in its current form didn't spring fully-formed from Wargaming's loins. The game had a long, winding and sometimes rocky road to rumble down before it became the seminal experience you can play today.

World of Tanks in its 2010 closed beta form would've been recognisable – just – to 2013's millions of players. There were still tanks, and they were still trying to shoot each other – but that early version of the game would've felt very different to play. It had smaller tank pool, altered statistics, and even a completely different physics model. Time and experience have allowed Wargaming to coax their baby through the pubescent changes that allowed the game to mature, attracting 50 million registered players in the process.

This feature explores some of *World of Tanks*' most important patches and updates in the years since its launch – it's a voyage no fan will want to miss out on.

JUNE 2010
CLOSED BETA

World of Tanks began its playable life in closed beta: a chosen few were allowed access to servers that ran version 6.1.5. The early iteration boasted a fraction of the tanks available to current players, and was primarily used to test balance between the metal beasts.

Players still trade tales on forums of the beta's overpowered T-44, and reminisce about the many soft resets that saw all a player's credits gifted back to them as the developers toiled and tweaked.



Looks like a box, kicks like a mule. With the beta, *World of Tanks* was born.



It was about the canon in 6.4, as aiming grew up.

MAY 2011
PATCH 6.4

This major update included a game-changing revision to the physics engine: 6.4 altered the act of firing a tank's canon, adjusting visibility, shell velocity, max range and the gunner's viewing system, as well as introducing a damage mechanic for tank tracks. The change was a sign of things the future, with the devs focusing on specific areas that could be tweaked between updates.

Hitboxes were also tweaked for a number of vehicles, as well as the maps themselves: fixes for players getting stuck on the edge of maps, or for certain skyboxes not connecting at the edges of the world, helped add some realism to the environments.

A duo of new maps added extra meat to 6.4's bones, but the update also redesigned a host of existing levels: Pagorki was renamed Mines, and Komarin was reworked to reduce cover at either end and bulked up in the centre in an effort to promote close-up firefights over long-range snipefests.

2010 2011

JANUARY 2011
PATCH 6.2.7

The closed beta's first major update, 6.2.7, added a handful of new tanks – including the T-54, Panther II, and Pershing – as well as now-iconic maps Ruinberg and El Halluf, plus a voice chat system.

MARCH 2011
PATCH 6.3.8

Another new map – Westfield – came with 6.3.8. Clan battles also arrived, allowing groups of tankers to team up and fight under the same banner.



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The Germans were all over 6.6 – a patch that was *sehr gut*.

JULY 2011
PATCH 6.6

Update 6.6 remains one of the game's biggest German-centric patches, bringing a platoon of beefy Teutonic tanks to the fray that included the Pz. VI Tiger (P), VK 4502 (P) Ausf A, E-50, E-75, and E-100. The new tanks were accompanied by a range of fixes and tweaks, again primarily focused on the German vehicles. The Panther and Panther II tanks had their tiers fiddled with, and the monster Maus had its gun's firing rate slowed down and its hit points reduced by a hefty 400. The poor brute.

A similarly Teutonic map – Siegfried Line – was also included, offering tankers the choice of battle surroundings: they could either fight in the confines of a small town to the map's east, or take their chances in the open fields of the west. Players taking the open route would have to be nippy, as they would be left open to artillery strikes and tank destroyer longshots, but rocky outcrops and outbuildings offered some cover.



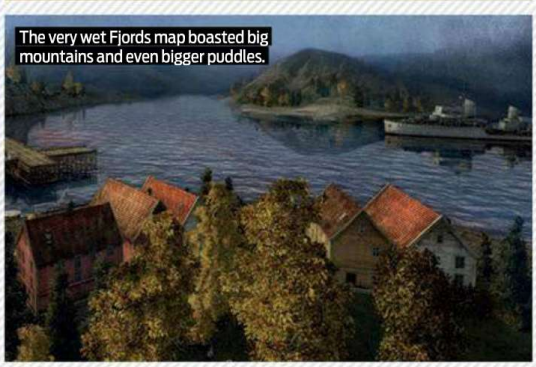
NOVEMBER 2011
PATCH 7.0

The introduction of camouflage would, in Wargaming's words, "add more to the strategic element of tank combat". For some, the chance to carefully match your tank's colouring to the map you were fighting on was tactically vital; others preferred to choose the most garish colour scheme possible. Patch 7.0 let tanks 'talk' too, as horns were added – just in case your yellow-mottled Maus wasn't obnoxious enough.

On the more serious side, the maps Marsh and Fjords were added, and Wargaming updated tank collision models. This was something of a portent for update 8.0, a root-and-branch rethink of how tanks interacted with one other and their world.

Also added was the complaint system, something that the community had ironically been complaining was absent for a long time. Its introduction helped the devs stabilise a booming player-base and make *World of Tanks* a more fun place to be.


Named after a mouse, built like a rhino. Like our pal 'tiny'.


The very wet Fjords map boasted big mountains and even bigger puddles.

2012

JUNE 2011
PATCH 6.5

The M26 Pershing was swapped out for the M46 Patton at tier IX. The update also brought a new range of American tank destroyers to the field.



SEPTEMBER 2011
PATCH 6.7

A small update that added a set of new US tanks, including the tier V light M24 Chaffee and the medium Sherman Jumbo – plus the Fisherman's Bay map.

APRIL 2012
PATCH 7.2

Live Oaks was the first US map – despite no tank battles ever taking place there. Also included were US tank destroyers with unique turnable turrets.

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Patches


The Bat Chatillon 155 packs a whopping great canon.


Assault and Encounter modes spiced up battles considerably.

JUNE 2012
PATCH 7.4

Two new game modes were slipped into *World of Tanks* in this update: Assault and Encounter added some tactical variance to the traditional two-base battles players were used to. New maps arrived alongside these new modes – Airpark and Widepark – as did a new range of French tank destroyers and SPGs.

World of Tanks' French vehicles were fast with decently powerful weapons, but flimsy armour meant they were weak in defence. The update's new tank destroyers and SPGs took this ethos to extremes, producing a range of useful artillery pieces and tank snipers – with the fearsome Bat Chatillon 155 at the top end – that could rain death on anyone on the battlefield, but would explode into a million pieces if ever accidentally breathed on.

Weak armour was counterbalanced by sheer rate of fire. The French SPGs were epitomised by faster reload and aiming speeds than their peers, meaning players adapted to dropping a few shots onto their target before moving across the map to realign, rather than waiting for that single, perfect killshot.

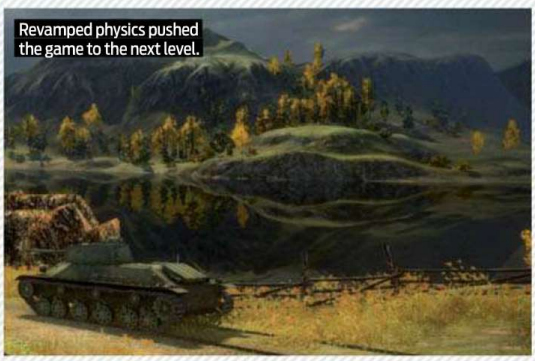
SEPTEMBER 2012
PATCH 8.0

Likely the most significant update of them all, 8.0 hit servers in September 2012 and rehauled *World of Tanks*' graphics, lighting, vehicle rendering and physics engine. Boom!

It was that latter change that proved the most important: tanks now had a physical heft to them that allowed players to feel where they could and couldn't send their giant metal charges. The new physics allowed armour into places that used to be decidedly off-limits – off cliffs at high speed, into the sea and so on – but the freedom was truly liberating.

Revamped physics allowed for a new tactical consideration: ramming. Tank weight was modelled, and players were able to use their sheer bulk to dominate others on the battlefield. 'Tankier' tanks could push their targets out of position – handy for when you want to force an enemy out of cover for your friends to unleash on their hull; even handier when you can use your extra tonnage to shove an opponent off a bridge to their doom.

Update 8.0 ushered in the modern face of *World of Tanks*. The result was a prettier, more advanced game, ready to deal with the more complex strategic challenges demanded by a mature community that had been playing for the best part of two years.


Revamped physics pushed the game to the next level.

2012 2013

MAY 2012
PATCH 7.3

A balance-heavy patch, 7.3 split the Soviet KV tank into KV1 and KV2 variants. It also introduced the game's first Asian map, Dragon Ridge.



JULY 2012
PATCH 7.5

This update unleashed tier X tank destroyers like the German JagdPz E-100 and Soviet Object 268 – some of the most lethal vehicles in the field.

NOVEMBER 2012
PATCH 8.1

The British advance arrived in October 2012, bringing 22 new tanks to the field including the patriotically-named Churchill and Matilda medium tank.

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The British Tortoise, as solid as its name suggests.



DECEMBER 2012

PATCH 8.2

Hot on the heels of the British came a new wave of US tanks in update 8.2. As with the French tanks already in the game, the new American vehicles – including the T71 tier VII light, the T69 tier VIII medium, and the T57 tier X heavy tank – came equipped with autoloaders, meaning gunners fired from a magazine without having to manually reload between each shot.

Like their French counterparts, these tanks were lacking in armour, making them useful for speedy, drive-by style attacks but lacking oomph when it came to a straight-up slugfest.

With the tech improving since the game's launch, Wargaming continued their rolling upgrades to *World of Tanks*' engine. Update 8.2 saw an increase in draw distances, meaning the new American tanks could spot their enemy, unload an entire clip in their direction, and then retreat behind cover to start the lengthy process of reloading an entire clip of shells. To accommodate this longer draw distance, 8.2 also gave trees new powers: they'd now provide partial cover where they fell.


Pearl River is a haven for snipers. Pick the Leopard I and fill your boots.

JANUARY 2013

PATCH 8.3

This update signalled the debut of Chinese tanks, with their own tech tree. Models included variants of Soviet T-34s and the French Renault NC-31.

MARCH 2013

PATCHES 8.4, 8.5 & BEYOND

Wargaming's 8.4 patch introduced a set of new tank destroyers for the British, including the Tortoise – a tough critter that, unlike other tank destroyers, can take a few shells before rolling over on its back and expiring.

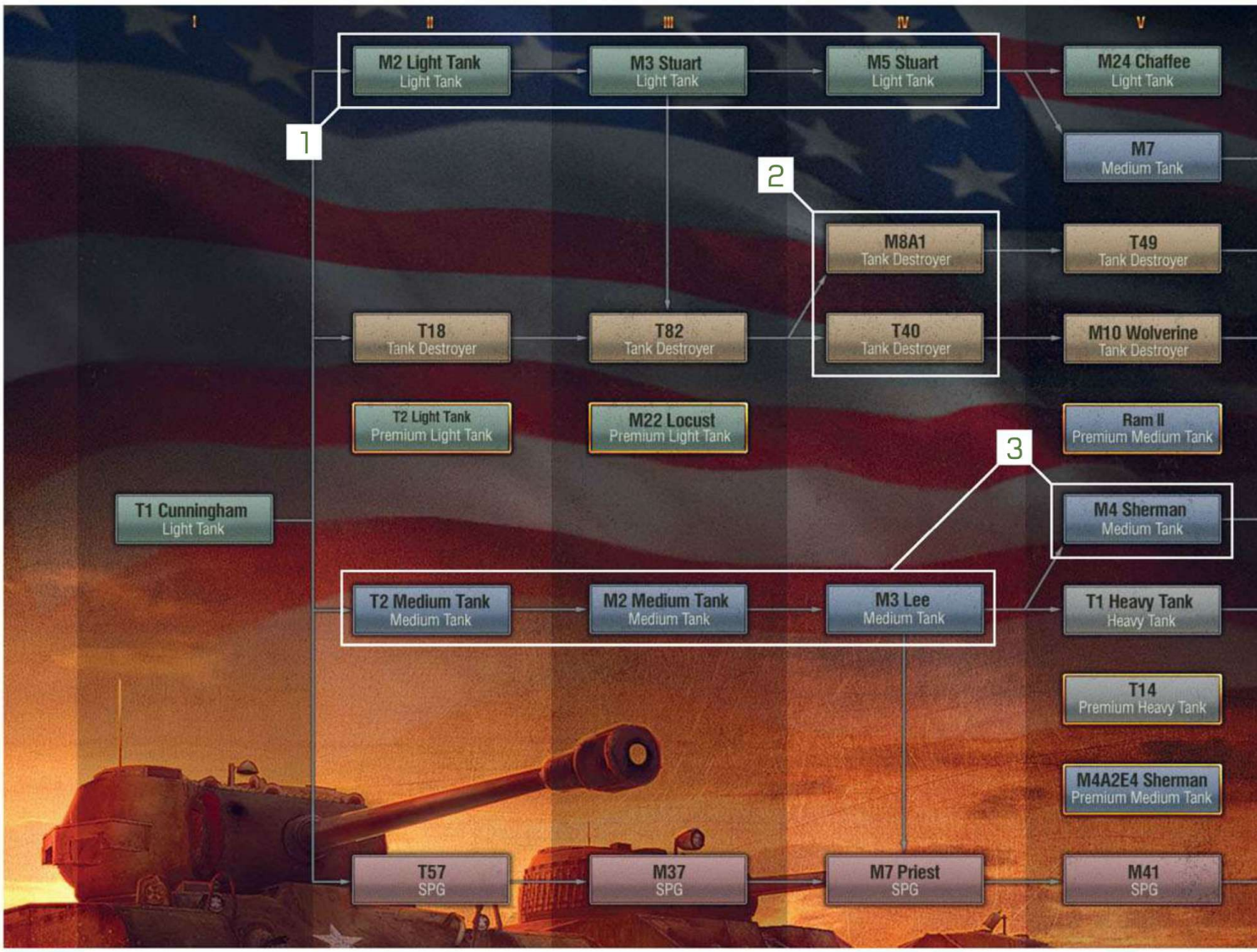
Update 8.4 also included a dedicated tutorial. It was the first of its kind for the game and a welcome step: the simplicity of *World of Tanks*' battles – point at enemy, fire gigantic gun, enemy explodes – is made much complex by the tier system, detailed physics and the peculiarities of five different branches of tank. Light tanks and self-propelled guns, for example, have marked differences in their operation that won't always be apparent to newcomers. The introduction of a tutorial showed a desire by Wargaming to cater to people trying *World of Tanks* for the first time, not just their hardcore. We hope that they'll foster this approach in their continued development.

Meanwhile, update 8.5 is due to be released soon and usher in fresh tanks like the German Leopard I and Aufkl.Panther plus the Soviet T-60. There's also the new, Asian-inspired map Pearl River. Here, battles take place high in the mountains and in a remote riverside city. There's little cover from arty, but plenty of vegetation and low hills to help you hide. With many avenues of approach to each of the asymmetrically placed flags, the best defence is likely a strong offence.

Since 2010, Wargaming have improved graphical fidelity, rejigged the tank tech trees and even introduced a new physics engine: a heartening and commendable commitment to their baby. It seems *World of Tanks* will rumble on for many years yet...

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Tech tree analysis



1 M2, M3, M5 STUART

US light tanks trade speed for armour as tiers rise. The M2 has great acceleration and speed – useful for counterbalancing its shoddy accuracy by getting you close to your target. The M3 Stuart is even faster, hitting 61km/h at only tier III, and the M5 continues the trend. After that, you'll have to make a choice about what you want to unlock: the M24 Chaffee is available at tier V for those who love to play speedy scout; those who prefer to contribute to fights might opt for the slower, tougher M7 medium tank.

2 M8A1, T40

US tank destroyers are unique, and come in two types: with turret and without. The former can turn their cannons on the spot like a regular tank; the latter have to turn their whole vehicle. Turreted tank destroyers make target selection a simpler process, but unlike regular tanks, most have their top open to the elements. This makes them easy pickings, especially for self-propelled guns who are able to drop a shell directly on their thinly armoured turret.



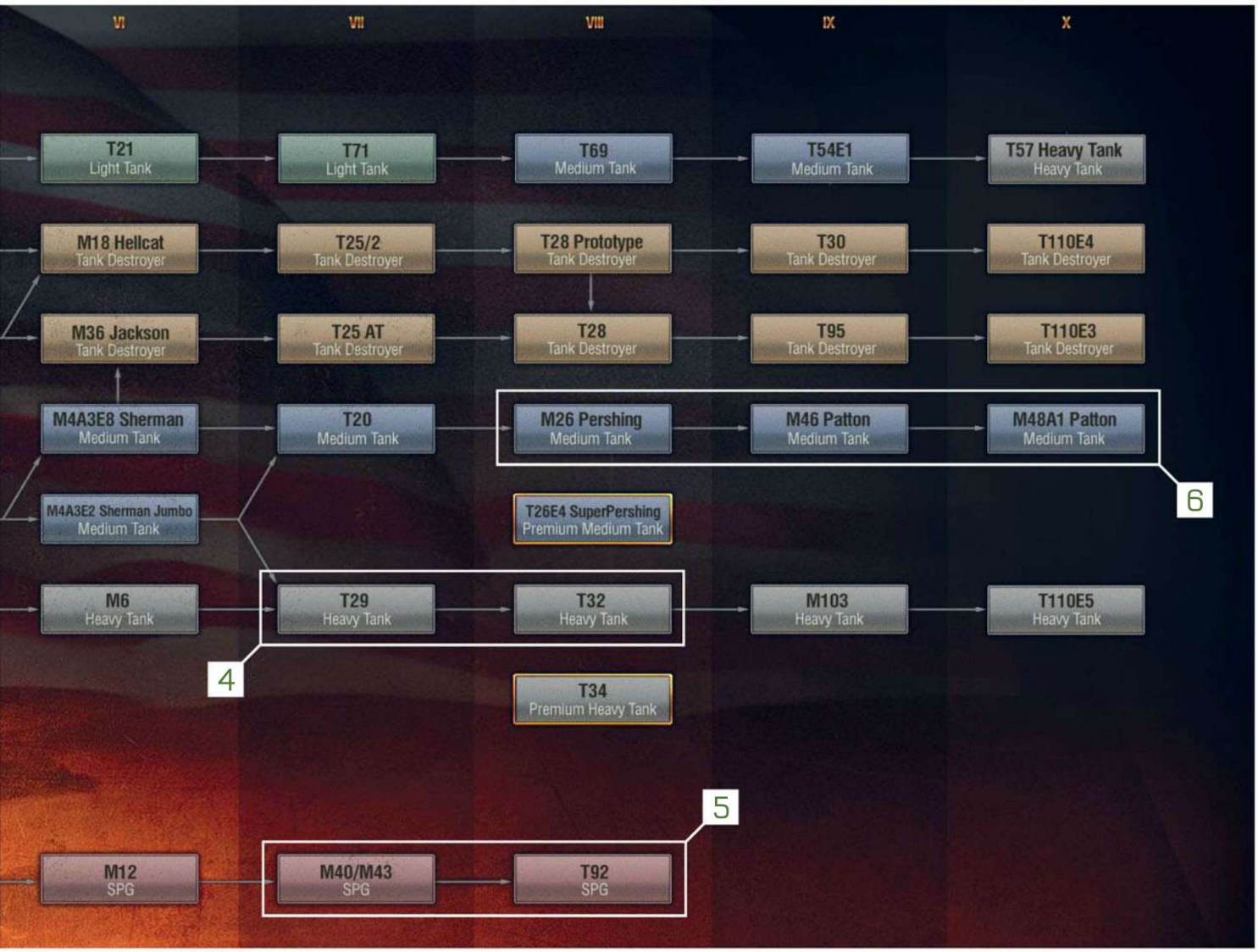
3 M4 SHERMAN

None of these mid-tier medium tanks boast particularly strong armour or high speed, but American medium tanks like the M4 Sherman come equipped with solid guns. Move as part of a wolfpack and you can rely on your teammates to cover your defensive deficiencies. Extra clever players might even be able to go it alone: a quirk of US tank design means these medium machines' turrets are well armoured. Sit your Sherman behind cover with only its top showing, and you'll stay alive for a long time.

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AMERICA

American tanks are dangerous in packs. They can do a lot of damage in a short time thanks to a high rate of fire, while slick mobility means they can swarm a position quickly. Drivers should beware, though, as they're weakly armoured compared to their peers.



4 T29, T32

The T29 and T32 – tier VII and VIII heavy tanks respectively – have nearly impenetrable turret armour. The rest of the vehicle is as easily popped as a regular heavy tank, but take a shot to the armour around the gun and chances are it'll bounce harmlessly off. Use terrain to your advantage when driving these American heavy tanks: sit further down in depressions and use your steed's design quirks to stay alive while you pepper opponents with shots from your upgraded weapons.

5 M40/M43, T92

The top tier American SPGs wield gigantic cannons as long as the vehicles themselves. Both the M40/M43 and the T92 do tremendous damage should they hit their target – indeed the T92's cannon is the most powerful weapon in the game. But actually *hitting* said target is a different matter: both the M40/M43 and T92 have woeful accuracy. Luckily, a wide splash damage radius means that even whiffed shots have a good chance of doing some form of damage.



6 PERSHING, PATTON

The medium tanks found at the top end of the US tech tree require finesse to get the most out of. The Pershing and two Patton tanks found at tiers VIII, IX and X are flimsily armoured but fast and well-armed, making them ideal for striking out of nowhere as part of a group, shredding targets with a high rate of fire. American tanks ask you to consider terrain: how to use cover to show certain parts of your armour, and how to attack without being spotted and shot first.

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Top 10

MEDIUM TANKS



10 D2

The D2 is the first French medium tank on the country's tech tree. It's a tier III tank, but thanks to a quirk of *World of Tanks*' matchmaking, it'll occasionally get thrust into games against tier V opponents. It's best to go find somewhere to hide in these, as the D2's quickly outclassed. Against opponents of its own tier (and lower) though, the D2 is a capable machine, its thick armour protecting it from weaker tier III and lower guns. The D2 is ideal for distracting the enemy and drawing fire as your punchier friends shoot back with their more powerful cannons.

Overview

Best at
Armour. The D2 is comparatively better armoured than other tier III mediums, and can take a few shots from most guns.

Worst at
Speed. It's a slow machine, thanks to its thicker armour and high number of hit points.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 3 ◆ **Hit Points** 210 ◆ **Speed Limit** 23 km/h ◆ **Tier** III ◆ **Cost** 42,500

9 Type 58

A vehicle born from Chinese imports of the Soviet T-34, the Type 58 is comparable to the T-34-85 model available to players exploring the USSR tech tree, but with better handling. Like the T-34 and its later variants, the Type 58's a good all-rounder, but with a few differences to its brethren. Its armour is weaker and its gun struggles to penetrate higher tier armour, but it's a more agile tank than other T-34 types, and it reloads quickly – making closing down lighter, smaller tanks a priority.

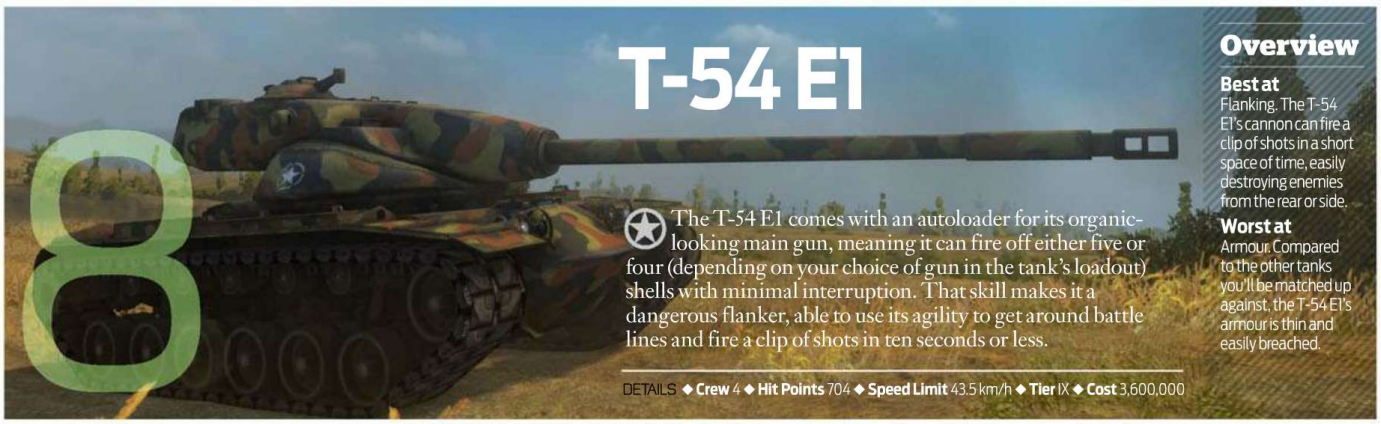
Overview

Best at
Flanking. Good speed and acceleration means the Type 58 can get behind enemy lines and fire on foes from the rear.

Worst at
The Type 58's armour is comparatively flimsier than other T-34-born tanks, and it has trouble in straight fights.



DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 5 ◆ **Hit Points** 720 ◆ **Speed Limit** 55 km/h ◆ **Tier** VI ◆ **Cost** 920,000



8 T-54 E1

The T-54 E1 comes with an autoloader for its organic-looking main gun, meaning it can fire off either five or four (depending on your choice of gun in the tank's loadout) shells with minimal interruption. That skill makes it a dangerous flanker, able to use its agility to get around battle lines and fire a clip of shots in ten seconds or less.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 4 ◆ **Hit Points** 704 ◆ **Speed Limit** 43.5 km/h ◆ **Tier** IX ◆ **Cost** 3,600,000

Overview

Best at
Flanking. The T-54 E1's cannon can fire a clip of shots in a short space of time, easily destroying enemies from the rear or side.

Worst at
Armour. Compared to the other tanks you'll be matched up against, the T-54 E1's armour is thin and easily breached.

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7 Panther II

Overview

Best at
Sniping. The Panther II isn't as tough as similar tier tanks, so it's better to do your damage from range.

Worst at
Armour. A large hull means the Panther II stands out as a target on the battlefield. It's also got a few armour weak-spots.

The Panther II's gun is massive for a medium tank, stretching out way beyond the hull's edge like some kind of proboscis. That translates to some competent damage output: the Panther II can't one-shot enemy tanks, but it can rain down some pain from afar thanks to its high accuracy. Afar is the best place to be putting your Panther II: a large armour weak-point on the tank's front mean the Panther will fold in a frontal battle against similarly high tier tanks. Use cover to snipe, and – when you're feeling particularly confident – the Panther II's acceptable speed to flank.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 5 ◆ **Hit Points** 1,350 ◆ **Speed Limit** 55 km/h ◆ **Tier** VIII ◆ **Cost** 2,390,000



6 T-54

Overview

Best at
Versatility. Like the T-34, the T-54 did well in real conflicts thanks to its ability to turn its turret to anything.

Worst at
Armour. The T-54's side and rear armour is a weakness. It fights best in groups so enemies can't get the jump on it.

The most-produced tank of all time, the T-54 can still be found in armies around the world. Like the legendary T-34 it's a remarkable machine, and suits drivers who don't want to be pigeonholed on the battlefield into a specific role. The T-54 can, thanks to well-sloped armour, bounce shots from heavy tanks, making it an acceptable city fighter or open field slugger – but its solid top speed is what allows it to really excel as a flanker. Establish your team's battle lines and rush past them, punching through enemies from the side or rear, before whisking your crew out of harm's way.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 4 ◆ **Hit Points** 1,550 ◆ **Speed Limit** 56 km/h ◆ **Tier** IX ◆ **Cost** 3,450,000



5 Centurion Mk.7/1

Overview

Best at
Sniping. The Centurion Mk. 7/1's gun is incredibly powerful, even at the top end of *WoT*'s tier system.

Worst at
Armour: Weak armour and a high profile makes the Centurion an easy target for your enemy. Fire from cover to stay alive.

An upgrade of the tier VIII Centurion Mk. 1, the Mk. 7/1 can be kitted out with one of the best guns in the game. The 105mm L7A1 cannon is totally lethal, with enough penetration to punch through the armour of most enemy tanks, and enough damage to knock them out of action quickly. It's accurate, too, and has a rapid aiming time. Although the Centurion's not the toughest platform for the weapon, the British tank is quick and agile enough to scoot between cover, bringing its cannon to bear on the enemy before ducking out of sight. *World of Tanks*' representation of the L7A1 is historically accurate: the gun remained best in class for years in the real world.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 4 ◆ **Hit Points** 1,620 ◆ **Speed Limit** 40 km/h ◆ **Tier IX** ◆ **Cost** 3,515,000 ◆ **Country** Britain

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Top 10



4 PzKpfw III

Overview

Best at
Scouting. The PzKpfw III is as fast as a light tank, and comes blessed with stronger armour than most tanks of that class.

Worst at
Sniping. Most of the PzKpfw III's guns are weak against similar tier tanks. A lot of your shots will bounce off armour.

It's a medium tank, but the PzKpfw III feels more like a light. Its top speed of 64 km/h is way above most other mediums, and it thanks to its nippy acceleration, it doesn't take it too long to hit that on straights. Thick frontal armour means you can use the PzKpfw III as a more bullish scout, poking your nose into places a weaker light tank would be afraid to stray, and relaying enemy positions back to your team. It's also ideal as a scout hunter, the high speed allowing you to chase down fleeing enemy light tanks and cheekily pop a cap in their rear armour.



DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 5 ◆ **Hit Points** 310 ◆ **Speed Limit** 64 km/h ◆ **Tier** IV ◆ **Cost** 138,000

3 T-34

Overview

Best at
Versatility. As in real life, the T-34 succeeds by being able to do everything competently.

Worst at
Speed. The T-34 has an acceptable top speed, but it takes a while to get there: its acceleration isn't much to shout about.

World War II icon and perhaps the planet's most famous tank, *World of Tanks*' T-34 isn't an obvious superstar. It's not got the best gun in its tier, nor the strongest armour or fastest speed. But what the T-34 lacks in specialisation, it more than makes up for in sheer versatility. T-34 drivers can turn their hand to a range of tasks on the battlefield thanks to their tank's wide skillset: it can take a shot, dish out reasonable damage, flank enemies, and hide from danger thanks to its high camouflage value. Play this medium machine in whatever role your team needs: scout if you've got loads of heavy friends; muscle if not. The T-34 is more than capable, and your fellow tankers will thank you for your selfless efforts.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 4 ◆ **Hit Points** 400 ◆ **Speed Limit** 56 km/h ◆ **Tier** V ◆ **Cost** 356,700



2 Vickers Mk. 2

Overview

Best at
Sniping. The Mk. 2's gun bests others in its class, making it a hard hitter.

Worst at
Armour. Keep it out of direct fights, or you'll be shredded like paper.

The second of three Vickers tanks at the beginning of the British medium tank tech tree, the Mk. 2 has paper-thin armour but a solid gun for its tier, making it a risky but rewarding choice for more careful tankers. Aim to upgrade your starting cannon as a matter of course: the basic version of the tank has very little to differentiate it from the tier I Vickers Mk. 1.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 5 ◆ **Hit Points** 170 ◆ **Speed Limit** 40 km/h ◆ **Tier** II ◆ **Cost** 3,500

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1 M48A1 Patton

Overview

Best at
Armour. The M48A1 boasts stronger armour than most other medium tanks. It's conveniently sloped, too, increasing ricochets.

Worst at
Speed. The tradeoff for the M48A1's increased armour is a decreased top speed compared to other medium tanks.

The M48A1 is the last American medium tank available to *World of Tanks* players, and, like its tech tree predecessor the M46, bears the surname of General Patton. The M48A1 is a solid all-rounder, able to go track-to-track with most of the game's other vehicles in a fight thanks to its curved armour that deflects or ricochets a good number of incoming shots. The M48A1 is a little slower than other top tier medium tanks, but has a great turret traverse speed, meaning it can react quickly to enemies spotted at different orientations and angles, bringing its gun to bear in seconds. This makes it a good city-fighter: streets and alleys between houses make for an abundance of right angles and straight lines, and the M48A1 can quickly aim its gun at new targets as they pop into view from side roads.

True flanking is tougher: the M48A1 hasn't got the speed and agility to sneak around behind your enemy's frontline tanks. Careful drivers will pick a preferred combat location and set up there, waiting for opponents between or behind buildings or outcrops. From there, the M48A1's better-than-average cannon and armour will usually give them the punch and survivability to win in a close-range engagement.



Tough as old boots, let the M48 take one for the team.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 4 ◆ **Hit Points** 2,000 ◆ **Speed Limit** 45 km/h ◆ **Tier** X ◆ **Cost** 6,100,000

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History of the tank



MEAN MACHINES

The evolution of the tank, from Da Vinci's dream to deadly war machine.

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“Tanks recalled the armoured knights of medieval times”

The tank is an iconic part of 20th century military history. Hulking, densely armoured and increasingly agile, they dominate open terrain warfare with their colossal canon and go-anywhere caterpillar tracks. In conjunction with infantry and air support, they constitute the tip of the spear when it comes to incursions into enemy territory – and have captured the imagination of military aficionados across the globe.

The history of the tank is surprisingly long, born in the imaginations of famous men such as Leonardo da Vinci, with his turtle shell design, science fiction dreamers like HG Wells and his ‘Land Ironclads’, and inventor FR Simms’ Motor War Car. Armoured machines that could provide both offensive and defensive support to troops on the battlefield – rather like the armoured knights and horses of medieval times – had been dreamed of for centuries and, by the time of the Great War of 1914-1918, the fledgling technology was finally in place to produce such a contraption.

And what a contraption it was – at least initially. Trench warfare had seen the Western Front descend into a mire of blood and mud. Machine guns and mortars were efficient at both establishing defensive positions and killing enemy soldiers in large numbers, but lacked the mobility to capitalise on potential territorial gains. Both the French and British – the latter inspired to some extent by the American Holt caterpillar-tracked ‘tractors’ that replaced horses in the haulage of artillery and other supplies – toiled on separate tank designs, with the ambition of safely crossing no-man’s land and engaging the entrenched enemy.

Arguably the first genuine tank prototype to be produced was the British-made ‘Little Willie’, requiring a hefty six-man crew and packing a 2lb canon and six machine guns. Ensuing iterations of the design were unleashed in the Somme Offensive on 15 September 1915, during the Battle of Flers-Courcelette. These lumbering metal beasts terrified opposing soldiers – although due to major engineering issues and weak battle performance, their psychological impact was considerably greater than their tactical one on the battlefield.

Go west

Meanwhile, the French had begun production of their own tank variants –

NAME GAME Why ‘tank’?

The word ‘tank’ was first attached to the British ‘Land Ships’ of 1915. Legend has it that, in order to retain the project’s secrecy, the workmen constructing the hulls were given the impression that they were fashioning mobile water tanks for the British Army, thus keeping details of the armoured fighting vehicle secret. The way war was waged changed forever, and the name stuck.

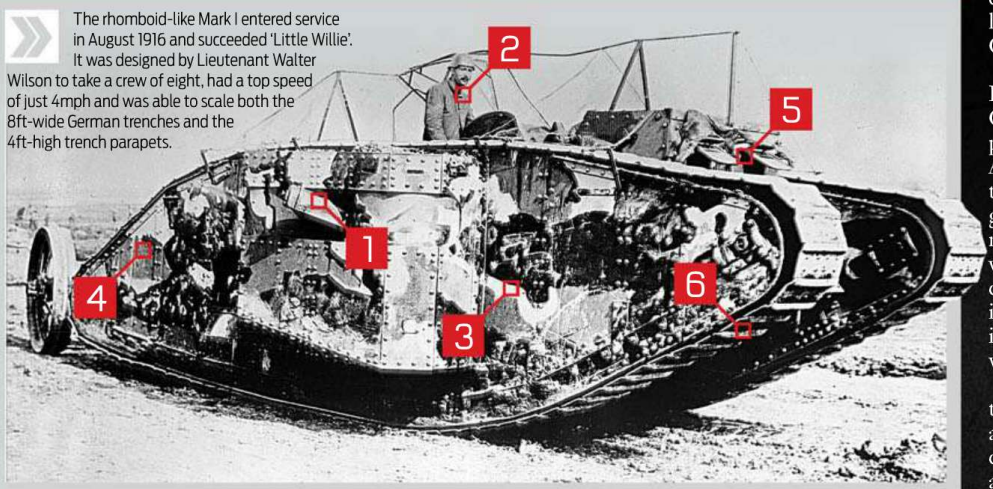


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History of the tank

TANK MATTERS A closer look at the iconic Mark I

The rhomboid-like Mark I entered service in August 1916 and succeeded 'Little Willie'. It was designed by Lieutenant Walter Wilson to take a crew of eight, had a top speed of just 4mph and was able to scale both the 8ft-wide German trenches and the 4ft-high trench parapets.



1 Guns
Two 6lb naval guns sprouted from the sides, as opposed to a turret, which would have unduly raised the tank's profile. It was also equipped with four 7.62mm Hotchkiss air-cooled machine gun placements for added firepower.

2 Crew
The first crews came from every regiment in the British army. Eventually troops became members of the Machine Gun Corps. In 1917 this became the Tank Corps, renamed the Royal Tank Corps in 1923 and the Royal Tank Regiment in 1939.

3 Engine
The Mark I was powered by a six-cylinder, 13-litre engine but only produced 105 brake horsepower and near-suffocated the crew with its fumes. The water-cooled engine could only be started by four men winding a crank.

4 Armour
Weighing in at eight tonnes, the Mark I's armour was inconsistent. Vital areas like the front could be as thick as 10mm, while others were around the 6mm mark. Bullets often penetrated through the gun emplacement sections.

5 Vision
Locating the enemy was an issue. Both the commander and driver could peer through flaps (which opened in stages) while there were also a number of slim periscopes, but the enemy soon learned to target these weak spots.

6 Tracks
These ingenious devices allowed all-terrain mobility. Unfortunately, a damaged track – either from enemy fire or resulting from unreliable engineering – could totally disable early tanks, leaving them sitting ducks on the battlefield.

the Schneider and the Saint-Chamond. The Nivelle Offensive – a 1917 attack on the Western Front – was a widespread failure, with the majority of the Gallic armour shredded by German artillery. More intriguing was the later Renault FT, the first armoured tracked vehicle to boast a turret that was able to rotate 360°. The FT-17, as it became known, pioneered the template for the modern tank and served with distinction through to the later stages of World War I. A light tank, it proved cheaper and simpler to produce than its lumbering opponent, the fortress-like German A7V.

After the war, General Erich von Ludendorff of the German High Command praised the Allied tanks as a principal factor in Germany's defeat. Although initially crude and unreliable, tanks slowly grew to become a mainstay of ground armies – as mechanisation and motorisation grew in import and nations' various military doctrines evolved to capitalise on their capabilities. Even so, it wasn't until World War II that the integration of the tank into army culture would be complete.

The seismic advances in military technologies during World War II meant armour constantly evolved to meet new challenges, with ever-increasing gun sizes and armour thicknesses at the forefront. German tank design, for example, progressed through at least three generations. Later models like the Panther (Panzer V) and devastating Tiger (Panzer VI) were among the most feared and respected pieces of armour of the war. Nevertheless, experience in combat proved that the most successful tanks were not necessarily the biggest – rather, a balance of factors including mechanical reliability, firepower, mobility and protection was deemed key.

For instance, arguably the most successful tank during World War II was the Soviet T-34. It combined an



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The Sherman M4 came to the party late, but helped win WWII.

innovative, effective sloping hull design with a reliability born of mass production. Indeed, the only Russian concession to altering the T-34 during the entire conflict was to upgrade its 76mm canon to a larger 85mm variant. The British and French may have begun the conflict with their superior tank knowhow, but despite iconic models like the Cromwell, Comet and Char, their overall impact was limited.

Radio ga ga

Although certain tank tales have come to be regarded as fact, it wasn't always the lethality of the armour itself that led to battlefield success. For instance, early WWII German tank doctrine highlighted the use of Blitzkrieg tactics – combining rapid movement and combined-arms tactics involving mobile infantry and air support. Crucially, it also utilised radio, meaning Nazi tanker crews could react to changing strategies with quicksilver speed. These tactics were eventually adapted to some degree by Allied forces, and while tank usage and doctrine initially varied widely among the combatant nations, by war's end a form of consensus was emerging.

Another intriguing role of the tank during World War II was their use in a wide range of military tasks. Specialised models included the flamethrower tanks of the Pacific theatre, and recovery tanks for towing disabled pieces of armour. Tank destroyers and SPGs (self-propelled guns packing a large calibre canon but often no turret) were also commonplace, and were often fashioned by reusing older, lighter tank chassis to house devastating artillery. For example, the malleable Soviet T-34 chassis could accommodate a fixed 100mm gun (becoming the SU-100), while the obsolete German Panzer II was modified to house a powerful 75mm PAK-40 gun (becoming the Marder II).

In the end, it was arguably production capabilities that decided the winner in the tank wars – the overly elaborate and over-engineered German models simply could not be produced with the same rapidity as their Allied equivalents, with the US M4 (29,000 in 1943 alone) and Soviet T-34 (over 35,000 between June 1941-May 1945) proving especially fluid. As their opponents churned out ever-greater numbers, the Nazis couldn't keep pace.

Since the end of World War II, tank evolution has continued apace. The Cold War (1947-1991) saw the rise of modern tank doctrine and of the general-purpose main battle tank – a principle that still holds firm today in theatres of war from Iraq to Afghanistan. Tank commander situational awareness might have increased exponentially, thanks to the state-of-the-art equipment like laser rangefinders, GPS and battlefield networks, but the role of armour in battle has remained largely unchanged. The future of the tank, then, is opaque – but these beasts of war continue to protect and serve, as well as fascinating and inspiring each new generation of budding aces. ■

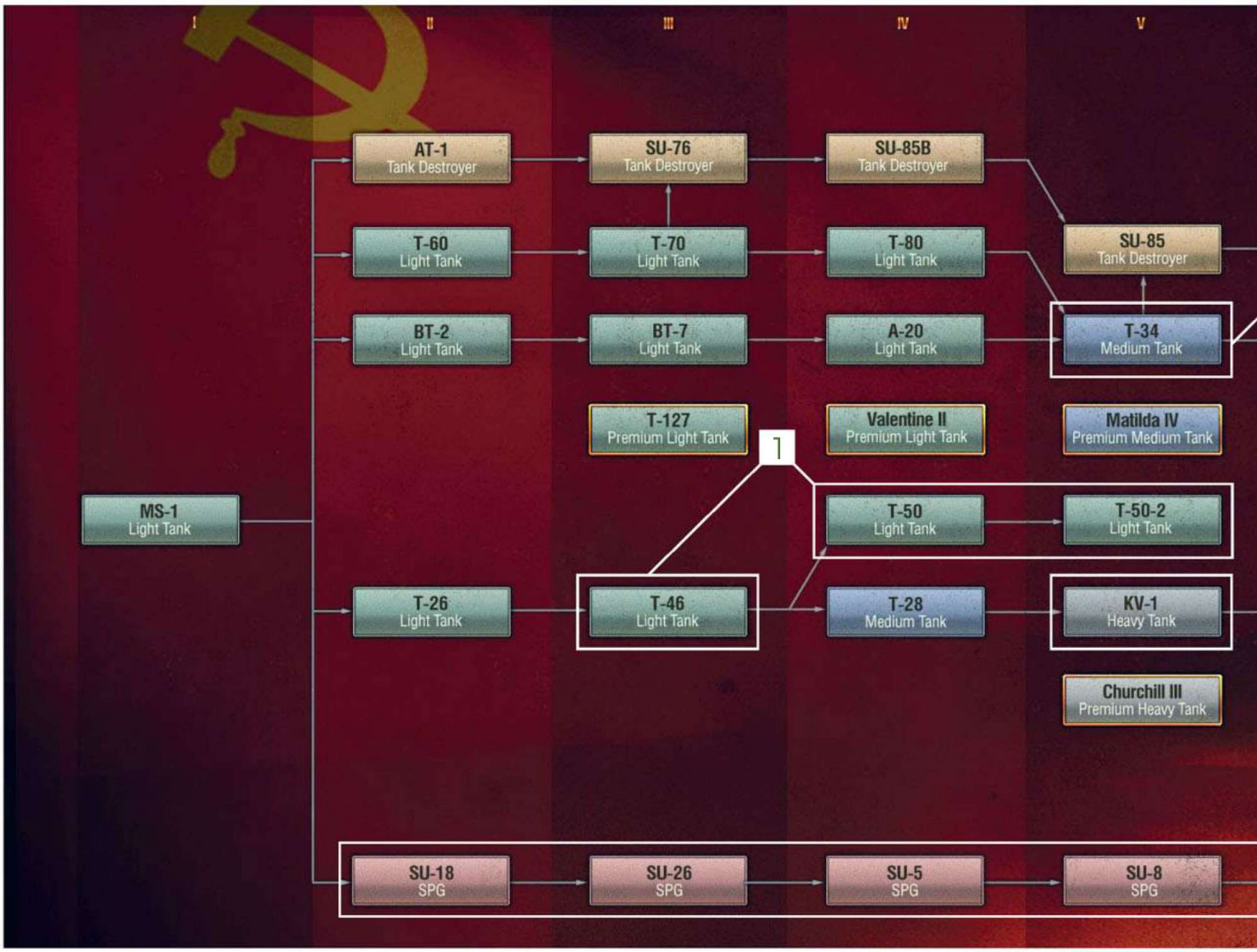

Tens of thousands of Soviet T-34s rolled off the production lines during WWII.



"German Panthers and Tigers were among WWII's most feared tanks"

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Tech tree analysis



1 T-46, T-50, T-50-2

These mid tier Soviet tanks are real racers. The T-46 can hit a respectable 58km/h at tier III, making it a incredible flanker, but it's the insanely fast T-50 variants that leave all comers in the dust. The basic T-50 will hit 60km/h, making it ideal for scouting enemy frontlines, before escaping trouble. The more advanced tier V T-50-2 can go even faster, at 72km/h top speed. That means you can be behind an enemy line and spotting your foe's positions before your opponents have even left their base.

2 T-34, T-34-85, T-43



It's one of the world's most successful and recognisable tanks, but World of Tanks' T-34 isn't a total knockout. Instead – like the other medium tanks in the Soviet tech tree's mid tiers – it's a jack of all trades, with competent firepower, armour, handling, and speed. Play the T-34 – and its older brothers the T-34-85 and T-43 – if you enjoy turning your hand to various battlefield roles, rather than sticking to one job game in, game out.

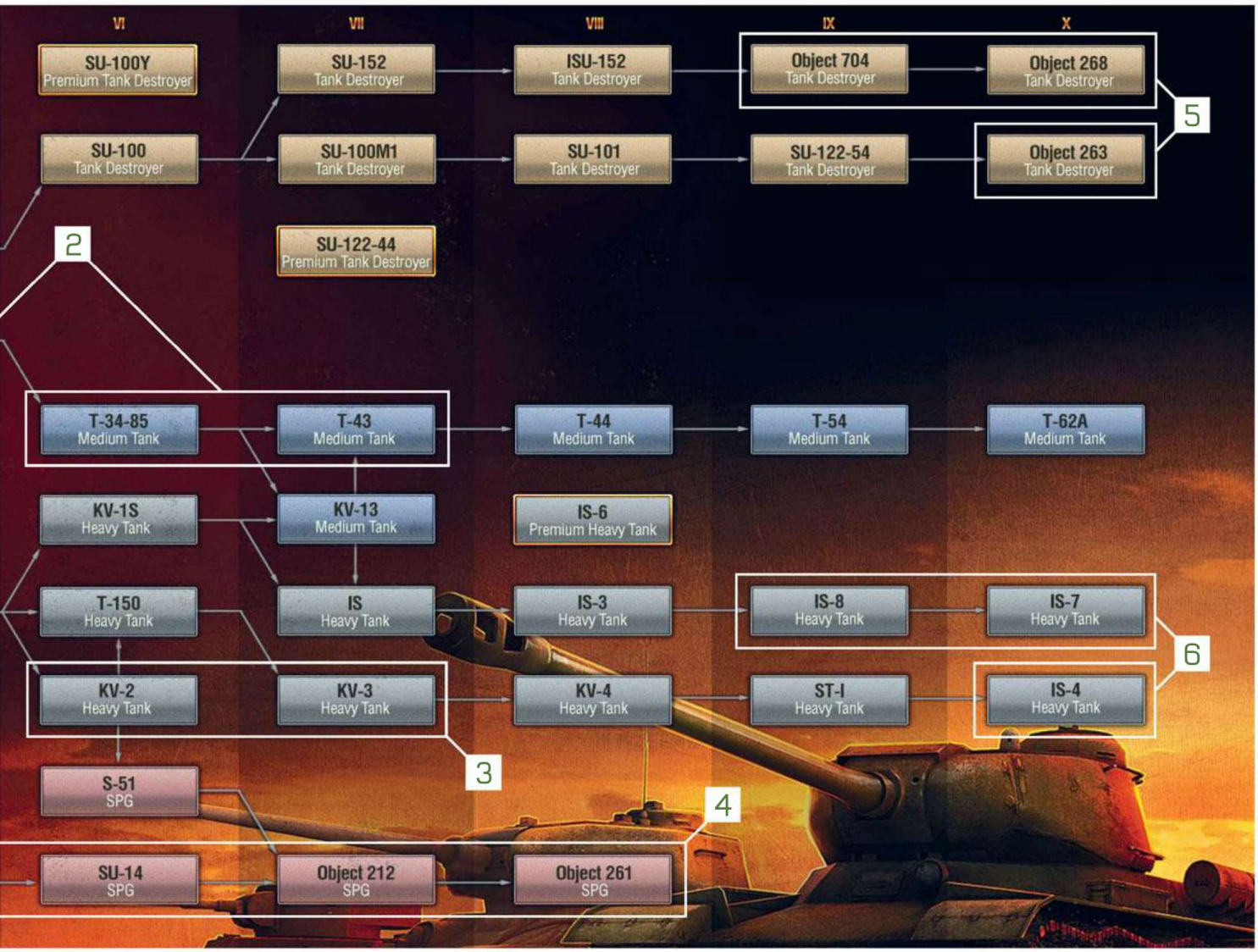
3 KV-1, KV-2

Playing as the KV-1 is an ideal way to learn how to handle a heavy tank, but it's the decision to unlock the upgraded KV-2 that bears the most discussion. Armed with a powerful but ludicrously inaccurate howitzer cannon dubbed the 'trollcannon' by the community, the KV-2 earned disparaging nicknames. It's been subjected to a few nerfs since its heyday, but bear in mind that choosing it for a game opens you up to ribbing from your teammates thanks to the machine's legacy.

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USSR

Soviet tanks tend to be speedy and armed with powerful weapons. They're not blessed with the thickest armour, but their sloped protection bounces incoming shells. Their one major downside tends to reside in their accuracy, making them better brawlers than snipers.



4 SU-8, SU-26

They've all got similar names, but the Soviet SU-monikered SPGs are different in application, demanding arty-focused players flit back and forth in play-style as they climb the tech tree. The SU-26, for example, is accurate with its shells, but does little damage per hit. The SU-8 – two steps up from the SU-26 – is inaccurate, but able to seriously hurt tanks of lower tiers. One of the few characteristics the SU SPGs share is a weak view range, so work closely with your team to net targets.

5 OBJECTS 704, 268

So named because they never entered active service, Objects 704, 268, and 263 all share similar strengths. They're all quick, able to get shots off and reposition faster than most other high-tier heavy tanks. They also come equipped with devastating weapons, able to punch holes in most enemy vehicles. They're not finesse shooters though, and their inaccuracy means they shouldn't be used to snipe. Keep them hidden, too – their armour is weak.



6 IS-8, IS-7, IS-4

The IS-8, IS-7 and IS-4 mark the tail end of the USSR's heavy tank tech tree, and are all relatively similar in feel and application. They trade thick armour for good speed and weaponry, but they're not totally defenceless when pinned down: the way their armour slopes means carefully positioned players can deflect shots that should, by rights, rip straight through their hull. Use them as hit and run artists; they might be late tier heavies, but they can't sit and trade blows with similarly sized foes for long.

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Achievements



MEDALS OF HONOUR

A guide to the bling in *World of Tanks*, and how to snag it.

In *World of Tanks* there's perhaps only one feeling more satisfying than seeing an enemy tank explode into flaming shards after a direct hit… and that's having a medal pinned to your puffed-out chest in recognition of your heroic achievements in battle. Whether you're a tank ace or an ass, a brave hero or simply a lucky so-and-so, here's a lowdown of the many decorations you can win in the game, and how to go about earning them, alongside a wedge of historical info about real-life tank legends to awe and inspire you.

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BATTLE ACHIEVEMENTS



Top Gun
Destroy more enemy vehicles than any other player on your team (at least six).



Defender
Reduce the number of enemy capture points on a friendly base by 70 or more.



Invader
Capture maximum points from an enemy base (not less than 80). The achievement is granted on successful base capture, *only* including the points that were part of the base capture.



Steel Wall
Receive the most hits (at least 11) of any player on your team, with potential damage of at least 1,000 HP, and survive.



Sniper
Achieve at least 85% hits out of a minimum of ten shots fired with the potential damage of 1,000 HP or more. Non-penetrating hits are included, hits on friendly units are not.



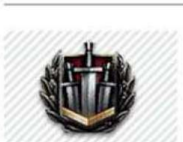
Confederate
Hit more enemy vehicles (at least six) than any other teammate. These enemy vehicles must subsequently be destroyed by another player.



Scout
Detect more enemy tanks and self-propelled guns than any other teammate (at least nine). Granted to a member of the winning team only.



Patrol Duty
Help your team damage at least six enemy vehicles by highlighting them.



Brothers in Arms
Awarded to a platoon in which all members destroyed at least three enemy vehicles and survived the battle.



Crucial Contribution
Platoon must destroy at least 12 enemy vehicles. All platoon members receive the award.

MASTERY BADGES



Mastery Badge: III class
Earn more experience in a single battle than the average highest experience of 50% of all players in the same tank within the last seven days.



Mastery Badge: II class
Earn more experience in a single battle than the average highest experience of 80% of all other players driving the same tank within the last seven days.



Mastery Badge: I class
Earn more experience in a single battle than the average highest experience of 95% of all players in the same tank within the last seven days.



Mastery Badge: Ace Tanker
Earn more experience in a single battle than the average highest experience of 99% of all players in the same tank within the last seven days.

VITAL INTEL

If two or more players have tied at the battle's climax, the achievement is granted to the player who has inflicted the most potential damaged (if applicable). Otherwise, it's awarded to the player who earned more XP (including additional XP provided to Premium Account users). If XP is *still* equal, the achievement is not awarded.

COMMEMORATIVE ACHIEVEMENTS



Cool-Headed
Survive at least ten ricochets and non-penetrations in a row from enemy players.



Lucky
Witness the destruction of an enemy vehicle by an enemy team player. You must be within 10m or less from the enemy vehicle at the moment of its destruction.



Spartan
Survive a ricochet or non-penetrating shot from an enemy player. Your vehicle must have less than 10% of its hit points (HP) left and you must survive the battle.

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Achievements

EPIC ACHIEVEMENTS



Bölter's Medal
(unavailable since 8.0 update)
Awarded for destroying seven tanks and self-propelled guns with a tank or tank destroyer, or ten vehicles with a self-propelled gun during one battle. Targets must be at least tier IV.
"Johannes Bölter was a prolific German WWII tanker, starring in the invasions of Poland, France, Greece and the Soviet Union."

VITAL INTEL
Epic Achievements are not awarded during Clan Wars matches.



Radley-Walter's Medal
Awarded to players on vehicles of the fifth or higher tier for destroying eight or nine enemy vehicles during one battle.
"Sydney Valpy Radley-Walters was a Canadian tank driver of the 27th Armoured Regiment. Between 1944–1945 he devastated 18 German vehicles with his feared Sherman Firefly."



Pool's Medal
Awarded to players on vehicles of the fourth or higher tier for destroying 10 or more enemy vehicles in one battle.
"Lafayette G Pool is celebrated as the US tank ace of aces, credited with 12 confirmed tank kills and a staggering 258 total armoured vehicle and self-propelled gun kills."



Orlik's Medal
Awarded for destroying three or more enemy tanks or tank destroyers with a light tank. The targets must be at least two tiers higher than the player's tank.
"Polish Army sergeant Roman Edmund Orlik was a talented tanker who knocked out 13 German tanks with his light TKS tankette in September 1939."



Tamada's Medal
Awarded to a light tanker who, in the course of a battle (that they survive) destroys three enemy self-propelled guns. Defeated enemy vehicles must be two tiers higher than the player's tank.
"Yoshio Tamada commanded the Japanese Fourth Tank Regiment at Nomonhan in September 1939, and led a night attack that succeeded in overrunning Russian artillery."



Lehväslaiho's Medal
Awarded to players driving medium tanks who destroy two enemy vehicles. These vehicles must be two tiers higher.
"Reino Lehväslaiho was a Finnish tanker credited with destroying seven tanks and tank destroyers."



Oskin's Medal
Awarded to players driving medium tanks who destroy three enemy tanks or tank destroyers. The targets must be at least two tiers higher than the player's tank.
"Hero of the Soviet Union, Alexander Oskin was a tank commander who destroyed three King Tigers with his T-34 in a reconnaissance operation near Oglenduv on 11 August 1944."

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Nicols' Medal

Awarded to players driving medium tanks who destroy a minimum of four enemy vehicles, which must be at least two tiers higher.

"Alfie Nicols was a British tank gunner. During the battle of El Alamein, he was credited with destroying 14 enemy vehicles."



Kolobanov's Medal

Awarded to a player who stands alone against five or more enemy tanks or self-propelled guns, and triumphs.

"Colonel Zinoviy Kolobanov was a Soviet tank ace who destroyed 22 German tanks, two guns and two half-tracks with his KV-1 in battle on 19 August 1941."



Halonen's Medal

Awarded for destroying three or more enemy vehicles with a Tank Destroyer. Targets must be at least two tiers higher than the player's vehicle.

"Erkki Halonen, a sergeant in the Finnish Army, destroyed three T-34s, two KV-1s and two ISU-152s with his StuG III in clashes during June and July 1944."



Fadin's Medal

Awarded for destroying the last enemy vehicle in the battle with your last round.

"Alexander Fadin was a Russian T-34 commander. Supported by one infantry platoon, he captured and held Dashukovka for five hours with one tank. He destroyed three tanks, one half-track, two mortars, 12 machinegun nests and an enemy plane."



Pascucci's Medal

Awarded for destroying three enemy SPGs in one battle.

"Second Lieutenant Luigi Pascucci was an Italian tank commander during World War II, assigned to the Ariete Tank Division in North Africa. During the Second Battle of El Alamein he sacrificed his life in a frontal attack that enabled his company to escape encirclement."



Dumitru's Medal

Awarded for destroying four enemy SPGs in one battle.

"Romanian Ion S Dumitru fought in World War II for just 25 days, five as a German ally and – after Romania changed sides – 20 against the Nazis. On 6 March 1945, Dumitru helped defeat six tank destroyers and capture a battery of 150mm guns."



Burda's Medal

This medal is awarded to players who destroy five or more enemy self-propelled guns with a tank or tank destroyer.

"Guards Colonel Alexander Burda was a Hero of the Soviet Union. On 4 October 1941, Burda ambushed an enemy armoured column, including ten light/medium tanks, two trucks with antitank guns and five infantry vehicles."



Billotte's Medal

Awarded to players who destroy at one or two enemy vehicles and survive the battle to victory despite receiving five different critical hits and losing 80 per cent or more of their hit points.

"Pierre Billotte was a captain in the French Army who destroyed two PzKpfw IVs, 11 PzKpfw IIIs and two guns with his Char B1 bis tank on 16 May 1940."



Bruno's Medal

Awarded to players who destroy three or four enemy vehicles and survive the battle to victory, despite receiving five different critical hits and losing 80% of their hit points.

"Pietro Bruno was an Italian tank maestro. For exceptional valour he was awarded Italy's prestigious Gold Medal of Military Valour (Medaglia d'oro al Valore Militare)."



Tarczay's Medal

Awarded to players who destroy five enemy vehicles and survive, despite receiving five different critical hits and losing 80 per cent or more of their hit points.

"Ervin Tarczay was a Hungarian tank ace who fought with the Hungarian Second Armoured Division and destroyed at least ten enemy vehicles."



Raseiniai Heroes Medal

Awarded to a player who singlehandedly destroys at least 14 enemy vehicles.

"In June 1941, near the Lithuanian town of Raseiniai, a single Russian KV-2 tank managed to hold off the German advance for a full day while being pummelled by a variety of antitank weapons – until it finally ran out of ammunition and was knocked out."



De Langlade's Medal

Awarded to a player who, in the course of one battle, destroys four enemy vehicles within a base circle at the moment they are capturing the base. Enemy vehicles may attempt to capture the base all at once *or* in turn.

"Paul Girot de Langlade was a French tank commander who distinguished himself in the Second Armoured Division in World War II."

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Achievements

STEP ACHIEVEMENTS



Abrams' Medal (IV–I class)
Awarded in one of four classes for the total number of team victories in which the player survived the battle: Class IV – 5 victories, Class III – 50 victories, Class II – 500 victories, Class I – 5,000 victories.
"General Creighton Abrams commanded US armoured forces during WWII and the Vietnam War, and earned a legendary reputation."



Ekins' Medal (IV–I class)
Awarded in four classes for destroying tier VIII, IX or X enemy tanks and self-propelled guns: Class IV – 3 vehicles, Class III – 30 vehicles, Class II – 300 vehicles, Class I – 3,000 vehicles.
"Joe Ekins was a private in the Northamptonshire Division of the British TA, and is believed to have taken out German tank ace Michael Wittmann."



Carius' Medal (IV–I class)
Awarded for the destruction of enemy tanks and self-propelled guns in four classes: Class IV – 10 vehicles, Class III – 100 vehicles, Class II – 1,000 vehicles, Class I – 10,000 vehicles.
"Otto Carius was a German tank ace of WWII. He commanded the PzKpfw 38(t), the PzKpfw VI Tiger and the Jagdtiger Tank Destroyer."



Knispel's Medal (IV–I class)
Awarded for the total amount of damage caused and received in four classes: Class IV – 10,000 HP, Class III – 100,000 HP, Class II – 1,000,000 HP, Class I – 10,000,000 HP.
"Kurt Knispel – a German tank ace during WWII – participated in battles on both the Western and Eastern Fronts."



Popel's Medal (IV–I class)
Awarded for detecting enemy tanks and self-propelled guns in all battles, in four classes: Class IV – 20 vehicles, Class III – 200 vehicles, Class II – 2,000 vehicles, Class I – 20,000 vehicles.
"Soviet Lieutenant General of Tank Forces, Nikolay Popel lead a raid against the enemy rear using captured vehicles in the battle of Dubno."



Leclerc's Medal (IV–I class)
Awarded for the total of the player's enemy base capture points, in four classes: Class IV – 100 points, Class III – 1,000 points, Class II – 10,000 points, Class I – 100,000 points. Unsuccessful or reduced capture doesn't count.
"Philippe Leclerc was a General of the Free French Forces during WWII and one of the leaders of the Paris liberation operation."



Lavrinenko's Medal (IV–I class)
Awarded for reducing the total number of capture points of a friendly base, up to 100 points per battle, in four classes: Class IV – 100 points, Class III – 1,000 points, Class II – 10,000 points, Class I – 100,000 points.
"Tank ace Dmitry Lavrinenko was recognised as the most efficient Soviet tanker, destroying 52 tanks in 28 battles in just two months."



Kay's Medal (IV–I class)
Awarded for achieving the Battle Hero status in four classes: Class IV – 1 time, Class III – 10 times, Class II – 100 times, Class I – 1,000 times.
"Douglas Kay, a British Army sergeant and gunner on a Sherman Firefly, participated in the Allied landing in Normandy and was famous for the popularisation of the history of tank warfare."

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RISE OF THE AMERICAS



Feelin' Peachy
Awarded to each member of the clan which – after the first day of the Rise of the Americas: Unclaimed Glory event – had captured the province of Atlanta, Georgia.



Deep Dish Delivery
Awarded to each member of the clan which – after the first day of the Rise of the Americas: Unclaimed Glory event – had captured the province of Chicago, Illinois.



No Sleep 'till Brooklyn
Awarded to each member of the clan which won the No Sleep Till Brooklyn Rumble, held between 1 and 3 February, 2013.



Show Me the Money
Awarded to each member of the clan which – after the first day of the Rise of the Americas: Unclaimed Glory event – had captured the province of Riverlands, Missouri.



Home of the Braves
Awarded to each member of the clan which, after the end of Rise of the Americas Stage 1, held the province of Atlanta, Georgia.



Capwned
Awarded to each member of the clan which, after the end of Americas Stage 1, held the province of Chicago, Illinois.



Fuhgeddaboudit
Awarded to each member of the clan which, after the end of Rise of the Americas Stage 1, held the province of New York City, New York.



The Mighty Mo
Awarded to each member of the clan which, after the end of Rise of the Americas Stage 1, held the province of Riverlands, Missouri.

VITAL INTEL
This particular set of medals are only available to *World of Tanks* players in the US server region.



Messed With Texas
Awarded to each member of the clan which, after the end of Rise of the Americas Stage II, held the province of San Antonio, Texas.



Rushmore, Capfast
Awarded to each member of the clan which, after the end of Rise of the Americas Stage II, held the province of Missouri Plateau, South Dakota.



Butting Heads
Awarded to each member of the clan which, after the end of Rise of the Americas Stage II, held the province of Big Horn, Wyoming.



Mile High Ranger
Awarded to each member of the clan which, after the end of Rise of the Americas Stage II, held the province of Front Range, Colorado.



Needs More Salt
Awarded to each member of the clan which, after the end of Rise of the Americas Stage III, held the province of Ogden, Utah.



Tankz N The Hood
Awarded to each member of the clan which, after the end of Rise of the Americas Stage III, held the province of Hood, Oregon.



Sand Crawlers
Awarded to each member of the clan which, after the end of Rise of the Americas Stage III, held the province of Death Valley, California.



Brave New World
Awarded to each member of the clan which, held any land in the U.S. at any time during the whole event.

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Achievements

TITLES OF HONOUR

VITAL INTEL
For full details of the following achievements (including additional conditions), please pay a visit the *World of Tanks* wiki at: *bit.ly/wot_achieve*



Master Gunner
Score five armor penetrating hits in a row against enemy vehicles.



Hunter
Destroy 100 or more of the Jagdpanther, Jagdtiger, Panther or Tiger vehicle variants.



The Lion of Sinai
Destroy at least 100 tanks of the IS series: IS, IS-3, IS-4, IS-6, IS-7, IS-8, ISU-152, Objects 704, 261, 268 or 263.



Patton Valley
Destroy 100 M46 Patton or M48A1 Patton IIIs.



Reaper
Destroy three or more enemy vehicles in a row with a single round each.



Ranger
Destroy all the enemy light tanks (must be at least three) in the course of a single battle.



Kamikaze
Destroy a higher-tier enemy vehicle by ramming it. Note: You can only earn this achievement once during each battle.



Mouse Trap
Destroy 10 or more PzKpfw VIII Maus tanks. The icon in the service record displays the no. of times the medal was awarded.



Bombardier
Awarded to the player who destroys two or more vehicles with one shot.



Sharpshooter
Hit an enemy vehicle 10 or more times in a row without missing.



Invincible
Survive five or more consecutive battles without taking any damage (not including battles fought using SPGs).



Survivor
Survive 20 or more consecutive battles. Battles fought using SPGs do not break the sequence, but are not included either.



Raider
Capture the enemy base and remain undetected during an entire battle.

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Master Tanker
Destroy at least one of every enemy type currently available.



Expert: U.S.A.
Destroy at least one of each type from the American tech tree.



Expert: Germany
Destroy at least one of each type from the German tech tree.



Expert: France
Destroy at least one of each type from the French tech tree.



Expert: U.S.S.R.
Destroy at least one of each type from the Soviet tech tree.



Expert: United Kingdom
Destroy at least one of each vehicle type from the United Kingdom tech tree.



Expert: China
Destroy at least one of each type from the Chinese tech tree.

VITAL INTEL

On this page of achievements it's worth noting that – in the event that new vehicles are added to *World of Tanks* – the icon becomes gray in the player's Service Record.



Senior Technical Engineer
Research all vehicle types in all nations' tech trees.



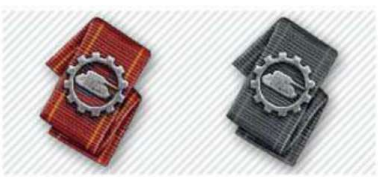
Technical Engineer, U.S.A.
Research all vehicles in the US tech tree.



Technical Engineer, Germany
Research all German vehicles within the tech tree.



Technical Engineer, France
Research all vehicle types in the French tech tree.



Technical Engineer, U.S.S.R.
Research all Soviet vehicle types in the tech tree.



Technical Engineer, United Kingdom
Research all vehicles in the UK tech tree.



Technical Engineer, China
Research all vehicle types in the Chinese tech tree.

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Top 10

HEAVY TANKS



10 T57

Overview

Best at
Close range. Use a tougher heavy tank as cover and punch enemies out with your autoloader clip before they can reply.

Worst at
Armour. The T57's rear and side armour is weak, and it's less tough than other tier X heavy tanks.

The T57 comes packing an autoloader, meaning it can fire its four shots off in a matter of seconds before needing to retire and reload another clip. Brilliantly, the T57's autoloader reload time isn't even that long, meaning the American heavy tank can kick out a vast amount of damage in a very short space of time. It's not the fastest or nimblest machine, but assuming you're using cover well, that shouldn't matter: you'll be able to kill any opponents in a volley of shots from your powerful cannon. A great choice for accurate aimers looking to make smash 'n grab raids.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 4 ◆ **Hit Points** 2,250 ◆ **Speed Limit** 35 km/h ◆ **Tier** X ◆ **Cost** 6,100,000

Overview

Best at
Close-range. The IS-3 is great at city-fighting, its low profile meaning it can shrug off incoming shots from alleyways.

Worst at
Sniping. The squat profile of the IS-3 means it doesn't have the gun depression to aim at enemies lower than its hull.

9 IS-3

The IS-3 is a low-slung machine, with a squished turret that sits far forward on its chassis and a long cannon that extends out. Its shape makes it ideal for getting up in enemy faces: the almost-flat turret means it's hard for enemies to penetrate the tank's shell on the first shot, and its agility means it can back out of trouble before they get a second chance to try. It also packs a wallop of its own: the IS-3's gun selection is great, its best cannon easily ruining most enemies of the same tier.



DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 4 ◆ **Hit Points** 1,450 ◆ **Speed Limit** 38 km/h ◆ **Tier** VIII ◆ **Cost** 2,568,500

Overview

Best at
Speed. Nimble for a heavy tank, it's able to manoeuvre quickly and bring its big gun to bear.

Worst at
Armour. It's got the lowest comparative armour of tier X heavy tanks, making it easily popped in the open field.

AMX 50B

The AMX 50B comes equipped with a lethal cannon. It's accurate, has good penetration and possesses an autoloader. That, coupled with the AMX 50B's high speed and agility means drivers can scoot into position, fire devastating volleys, and retreat to reload without taking a hit. That duck-and-dive playstyle suits the AMX 50B: it's not got the armour to take repeated shots, but makes short work of most other vehicles.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 4 ◆ **Hit Points** 2,100 ◆ **Speed Limit** 65 km/h ◆ **Tier** X ◆ **Cost** 6,100,000



8

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7 T29

Overview

Best at
Covering. The T29's gun is fast firing and quick to aim, making it good for scaring off enemies firing on your team.

Worst at
Armour. Careful players will find the T29's turret almost impenetrable, but the rest of the armour is paper thin.

The T29's turret is truly distinctive: it looks like it has ears. Two lumps on the outside of the tank's top adds to its vast size, making it a huge target for aiming enemies. But it's better the turret draw fire than the rest of the tank; the former is coated in beautifully angled armour that's hard to break through, while the remainder of the tank feels like it's been finished in paper – it's almost as weak, too. If you're fortunate enough to seek out a hiding spot that your turret can peek out from, you can run wild with the T29's fast-firing cannon and really rack up the kills.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 6 ◆ **Hit Points** 1,150 ◆ **Speed Limit** 35 km/h ◆ **Tier** VII ◆ **Cost** 1,450,300



6 Black Prince

Overview

Best at
Armour. The front of the Black Prince is strong, bouncing a lot of shots fired by opponents. Be careful of flanking enemies.

Worst at
Speed. Even for a heavy tank, the Black Prince is painfully slow. It takes an age to get anywhere.

The British Black Prince is seriously slow. It's almost impressively sluggish in comparison with fellow tanks – it feels like it'd be faster to get out and push when going uphill. But if you can wangle it into position, you can bring its powerful, quick-firing gun to bear on enemies, turning the Prince into a devastating proposition. It's not going to escape from trouble, though, so think long and hard about your placement. Buildings make good cover; their right angles allowing you to put the Black Prince's tough frontal armour first. It's also a good vehicle for protecting weaker pals.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 5 ◆ **Hit Points** 1,450 ◆ **Speed Limit** 20 km/h ◆ **Tier** VII ◆ **Cost** 1,400,000


Quick for a big 'un but made out of cardboard, the 113 is a natural flanker.

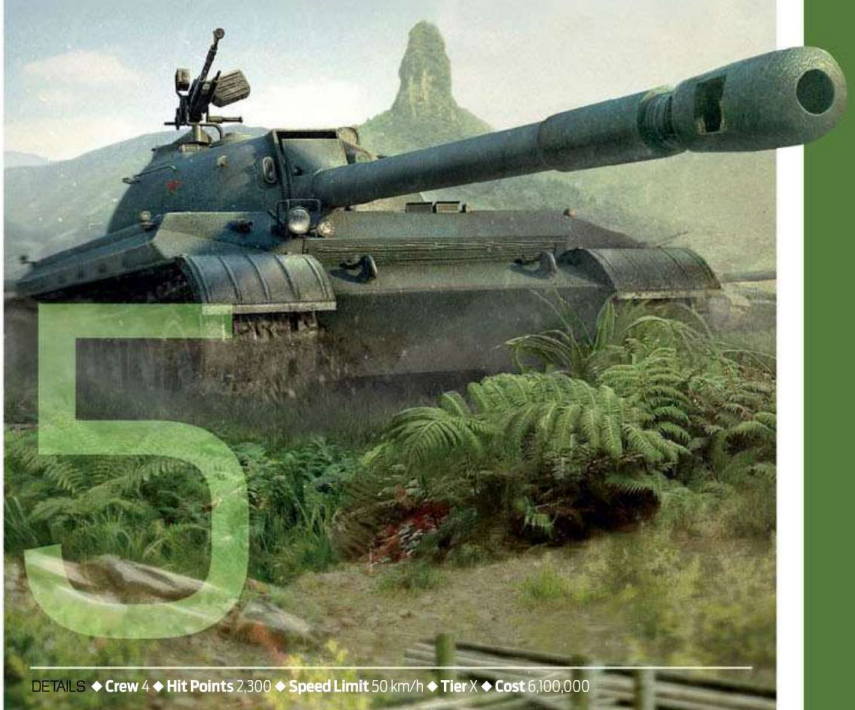
113

Overview

Best at
Flanking. Rapid for a heavy; the 113's agility means it can get behind frontlines easily.

Worst at
Armour. The 113's hull is very weak when put against its heavy tank peers, meaning it should always attack from cover.

It's only three more numerals than its brother, the Chinese 110 heavy tank, but the 113 is a marked departure from that bruiser. The 113's armour is much thinner than other tier X heavy tanks, meaning it's not as suited to city-fighting or mid-map punch-outs. Use the 113 as a flanker, though, and you'll have great success: the tank's as quick as most mediums, able to keep pace with them on group pushes, and comes armed with a gun powerful enough to knock most lighter foes on their backs. Think of the 113 as a super-medium, rather than a heavy tank, and you'll do well.



5

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 4 ◆ **Hit Points** 2,300 ◆ **Speed Limit** 50 km/h ◆ **Tier** X ◆ **Cost** 6,100,000

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Top 10



4 B1

Overview

Best at
Armour. It's got a weak-spot in the centre of its hull, but the rest of the B1's armour is top notch for tier IV.

Worst at
Sniping. Low penetration on its guns means it's tough for the B1 to knock beefier tier IV tanks out of the fight.

The B1 is something of a mini-heavy tank: not quite beefy enough to justify its high weight bracket. The French machine is also the lowest tier heavy tank available to players, and will die quickly when put up against opponents of tier V or above - real heavy tanks. But stick it against tier IVs or below, and it becomes a competent killer. It comes with some good armour (despite a weak spot in its front where another, unusable gun sits), and has a rapid-firing cannon that'll make short work of the kind of flimsier opponents you're likely to face in tier IV matches.



DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 4 ◆ **Hit Points** 380 ◆ **Speed Limit** 28 km/h ◆ **Tier** IV ◆ **Cost** 185,000

3 110

Overview

Best at
Close-range. The 110 is a sturdy tank, and comes with well angled armour and a decent gun. Feel free to take it into brawls.

Worst at
Armour. Its armour is well sloped, but it can be weak if angled badly. Avoid engagement with your rear or side showing.

Like a lot of the Chinese tank tech tree, the 110 is born from Soviet origins. It's an upgrade of the USSR's IS-2 tank, and comes with armour perfectly designed to deflect incoming shots. Its turret sits low against the rest of its hull like a metal lined egg, flicking enemy shells into the air without much trouble. Thoughtful drivers will be able to take advantage of this on the field: set the 110 up in a position with its rear, side and bottom armour covered well and you'll be able to fight for ages, your own gun able to put the hurt on opponents of tier VIII and even above. Get caught in the open and you're in more trouble: that side and rear armour isn't so well designed. It's best to either play the 110 from good cover, or move around a lot.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 4 ◆ **Hit Points** 1,450 ◆ **Speed Limit** 40 km/h ◆ **Tier** VIII ◆ **Cost** 2,600,000

2 KV-1

Overview

Best at
Armour. The KV-1 has a thick hull, and tanks of a similar tier will have trouble cracking its shell.

Worst at
Speed. That thick armour comes at a price: the KV-1 is slow on straights and sluggish to turn.

Built to last, the KV-1 comes dressed in impressive armour. In the real world, the Soviet army built the machine to withstand almost any gun of the era, and that design philosophy shows in-game. The KV-1 can take - and deflect - hits from almost any tank of the same tier. It also does a good job against higher tier tanks, but its lengthy aiming time and inaccurate gun might mean you'll want to switch machines for tier VI and above battles.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 5 ◆ **Hit Points** 590 ◆ **Speed Limit** 34 km/h ◆ **Tier** V ◆ **Cost** 390,000

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1 PKzPkfw VIB Tiger II

Like many of the German army's tanks, the KzPkfw VIB earned a feline designation: Königstiger. Technically the German for 'Bengal tiger', the allied forces took this to mean 'king tiger', and kept the name when referring to the tank in the battlefields of 1940s Europe. Like its big cat namesake, it's a fearsome beast, but unlike its namesake, the Tiger II a massive heavy tank blessed with an incredibly accurate main cannon and well designed armour.

The Tiger II is slow, even compared to other heavy tanks, but that can work in your favour: the tank is best played from further back, giving you time and space to pick your targets thanks to the Tiger II's excellent view range and lethal main gun. That gun is worth upgrading quickly, but even the Tiger II's stock cannon will penetrate most tanks of a similar tier. Against tier IX and X machines, you'll need to play more cautiously – the profile is big, and stands out to scouts – but with careful shooting, you'll be able to knock out tracks or punch through weaker armour thanks to the cannon's solid accuracy and range.



A beast of the battlefield, loved by friends and feared by foes.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 5 ◆ **Hit Points** 1,500 ◆ **Speed Limit** 28 km/h ◆ **Tier** VIII ◆ Cost 2,450,000

Overview

Best at
Sniping. The Tiger II's gun is super-accurate, and with a bit of research, has great penetration against most peers.

Worst at
Speed. Top tier heavy tanks aren't generally known for their speed, but the Tiger II is particularly slow.

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Giftageddon!

FREE GIFT FOR NEW PLAYERS!

WORTH £10.12

Premium access, a premium tank, gold... and a garage.

World of Tanks is – famously – a free-to-play title, but sometimes it's nice to treat yourself. To get new tankers started on the road to all-conquering glory, we've teamed up with the generous spirits at Wargaming to give newbies a thrilling head start. Enter this code and you'll instantly acquire a menagerie of gifts – worth over a tenner in British quids!

250 gold plus 7 days of premium account

Gold can be used to purchase Premium account status, which boosts your XP, crew XP and the credits received in battle, as well as giving you an upgraded garage and the ability to create a tank company; 250 gold is a great head start for winning a few battles, while an entire week of Premium account status means you'll get the drop on other newbies… and maybe even a few grizzled veterans.

Gold is massively multifaceted in *World of Tanks*. It's possible to convert it into credits, or spend it to take the XP you're accumulating on your fully upgraded tanks and apply it to vehicles you've not started researching yet.

Finally, there are a number of premium tanks that are only available for gold – these come fully upgraded, and developers Wargaming suggest using them to earn precious, transferable XP. Then there are garage slots, consumables, premium ammunition, crew training, barracks enlargement and the ability to give your crewmen new names. Basically: gold is useful, and that's an understatement.

Plus if you've already got a *World of Tanks* account, why not use this code to lure a pal into battle with you?

Premium tank Mk. VII Tetrarch plus free garage slot

As if things weren't topper enough, the bonus code nets virgin tankers this little beauty: the Mk. VII Tetrarch, a Soviet tier II premium light tank.

The Tetrarch was a British light tank produced by Vickers-Armstrong in the late 1930s and deployed during World War II. It improved upon its predecessor, the Mk. VIB Light Tank, by introducing the extra firepower of a two pounder gun – but owing to production delays was never produced in large numbers.

It's a similar story here – as a premium tank Wargaming promise that it will *never* become available for purchase, making the Tetrarch something of a collector's item. It's well-armed, nippy on firm ground, has a powerful radio and offers excellent penetration and damage for its class; though as a light tank it also suffers from weak armour, doesn't have the best view range and is sluggish on cross-country terrain. Ah well, you can't have it all.

Best of all, your shiny new Tetrarch won't even take up any existing garage space – Wargaming are providing one extra storage spot to new players, gratis.

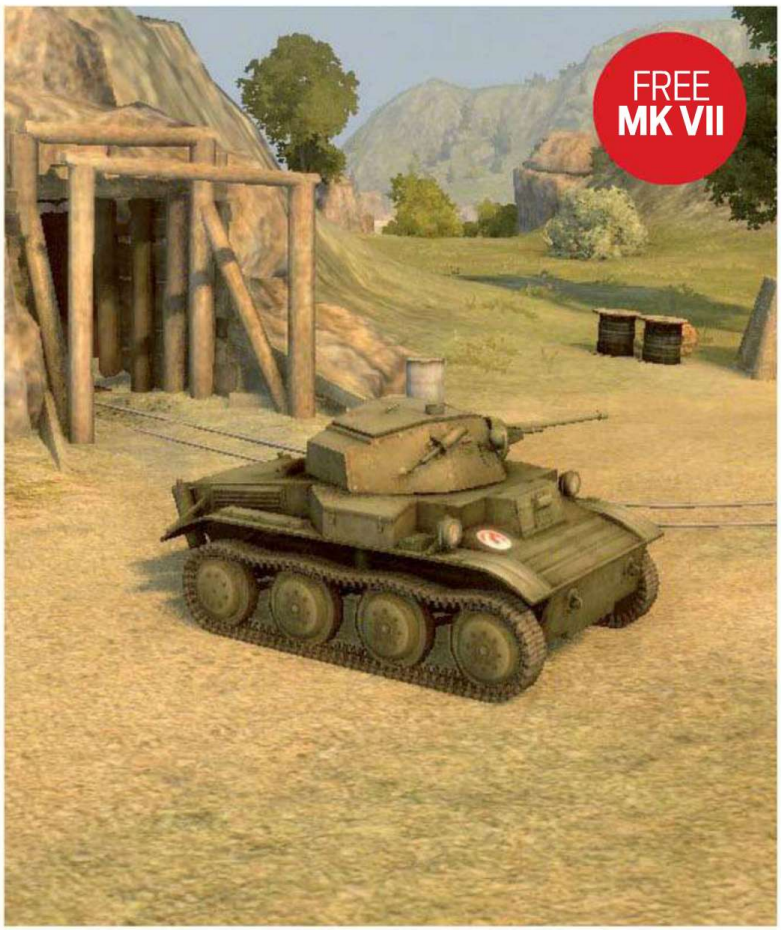
How do I redeem my code?

Point your mouse towards worldoftanks.eu or .com and click on 'Create Account' at the top right of the screen. Fill in the rest of the registration form as usual, and click 'Have an invite code?' to reveal the code submission field. Enter your code – and enjoy!

WGPRMTN

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Tank in Focus



M4 SHERMAN

DETAILS ◆ **Name** M4 Sherman ◆ **Nationality** American ◆ **Class** Medium ◆ **Crew** 5 ◆ **Hit Points** 400 ◆ **Speed Limit** 48km/h ◆ **Tier** V ◆ **Cost** 350,500

At a glance

Pros

- Jack of all trades with impressive speed and decent mobility
- Tough turret front, reinforced by a wide mantle capable of repelling guns up to tier V
- Class leading turret view range of 420m
- Decent damage on both guns
- Offers two play styles – scout with the 76mm and sniper with the 105mm
- Incredible gun penetration for its tier; enough to penetrate most tier VI tanks
- Cheap ammo and repair costs
- The premium ammo (105mm HEAT) makes it potentially possible to speed grind the M4

Cons

- High silhouette means the M4 is an obvious target on the battlefield
- Weak armour in comparison with similar tier tanks like the Soviet T-34
- The 105mm canon lacks the accuracy of rivals like the German Panzer IV



That monster turret spells purdy panaromic views...



...though that towering silhouette means it's a cinch to spot.



The Sherman's 76mm canon is accurate; the 105mm is devastating. Pick a gun, any gun...

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The M4 Sherman was the primary tank utilised by America during World War II, with a staggering 49,234 built in total. Additionally, thousands were distributed to the British Commonwealth and Soviet armies.

The Sherman evolved from the Grant and Lee medium tanks, which boasted a side-sponson mounted 75mm gun. The M4 added the first American main 75mm gun mounted on a fully traversing turret, later upgraded to 76mm.

The tank first saw combat in the North African theatre, where they bested German tanks like the Panzer II and III but were outmatched by Tiger I and II heavy variants. In the Pacific Theatre, though, the Sherman largely dominated its Japanese opposition.

Here's how to use the M4 Sherman to devastating effect in *World of Tanks*.



COMBAT TACTICS UTILISE THESE STELLAR STRATEGIES TO MASTER THE M4



Capital Gunishment

It's a sensible idea to prioritise initial research on both your tank's suspension and canon, before latterly turning your focus towards tweaking radio and engine. The Sherman offers two excellent guns, both hugely efficient but also requiring different combat tactics to wield effectively. The first is the 76mm M1A1, which combines devastatingly accuracy with a high firing rate. The second is the 105mm SPH M4L23, which can destroy even tier V tanks with a single shot if you target weak links in their armour. Unfortunately, this boon is offset by a lengthy reloading time and relative inaccuracy.



All Terrain

Flat, open terrain spells death for the M4, especially if foes (like PzIVs) are packing accurate, quick firing guns. Hunt in packs, ideally tucking in behind heavier, more armoured models. Look to lead enemies into areas of uneven ground; the Sherman's excellent gun depression means you can peek over hilltops, aim, fire and duck back into cover to reload. It's a luxury many of your opponents won't have.



Talking Tactics

The stock M4 has manifold weaknesses. An M4 that's been extensively upgraded is a beast. Try to flank before firing a couple of rounds into weakly armoured parts of hostile vehicles, before fleeing from any of its allies in the vicinity. Assume key strategic positions on battlefields to maximise the M4's effectiveness, like the mountain on the Mines map or the castle in Himmelsdorf.





Flanks a Lot

The excellent viewing range provided by the top turret allows the Sherman to hide itself in bushes and identify enemy units so friendly vehicles become aware of opponents' locations. To do this, consider purchasing the Camouflage module, further complemented by Camouflage Net, Coated Optics and Binocular Telescope. (Instead of Coated Optics you might also consider opting for Improved Ventilation).



Scout's Honour

If you're a fan of 76mm guns, the variant on the M4 possesses an extremely fast rate of fire as well as being pretty accurate. In this case, consider using the Sherman like a scout – and track foes. Identify enemies stranded in the open and direct allies towards them for easy kills. If you find yourself isolated and in trouble, then adopt 'shoot and scoot' tactics and hope that your quick reload stats bail you out.



Demolition Man

The powerful 105mm canon option makes the M4 Sherman an ideal sniping machine. Assume a comfortable position not far from the spawn point to ensure protection of your base and friendly artillery units before commencing blasting any approaching hostile vehicles from long range. With a decent amount of practice you'll find you can hit targets at 500-600m upwards of 50% of the time. Try to make your shots count, though, as due to its imposing silhouette your Sherman is potentially easily spotted by eagle-eyed enemies.



Money Talks

Tier V tanks are top money making machines if you're in the business of farming credits, and the Sherman will pull in around 20k per battle. It's also cheap to both run and repair, meaning you can fire those off those shells with relative abandon and not be left counting the cost afterwards.







Crew Cut

A good choice of perks would be to train your commander in Sixth Sense, Brothers in Arms or Mentor. Opt for Adrenaline Rush or Intuition for loaders, Situational Awareness for radio operators, Smooth Ride or Off-Road Driving for Drivers and Deadeye or Snap Shot for gunners.

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Fan art

MEET THE FAN ART-ILLERY

Posters, paintings, models and more.

Unless a 50-ton, gas-guzzling metallic mistress sounds like your idea of heaven, tanks just aren't – for lack of a better word – *sexy*. Turning a monstrous tank into eye candy is tough, but the fan art produced by the *WoT* community is a sight to behold. Using just pencils, pastels (and in some cases wood and Lego), players have captured the beauty of their beasts for all to enjoy.

So while we can't promise sexy, we've selected the cream of the crop for your viewing pleasure. So roll out tankers... your patchwork quilts and felt-tip pens. It's time for Art-illery 101.



1



2


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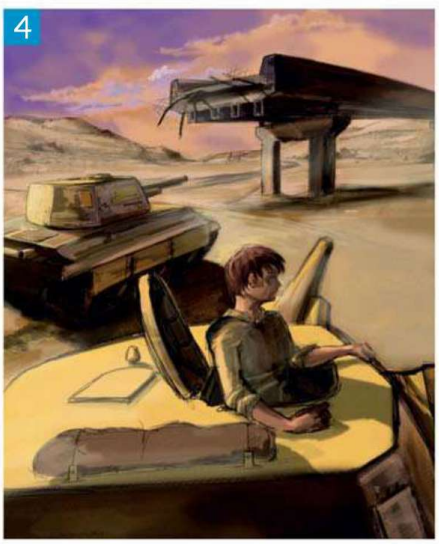
DETAILS 1 **Close in on** by Captain_AGES 2 **The King** by FailZord 3 **Mountain pass** by ShrapnelFace 4 **Waiting for the countdown** by Qyygle 5 **KV-5** by Anon

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4



PAINTED ART



5

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Fan art

CLAN POSTERS

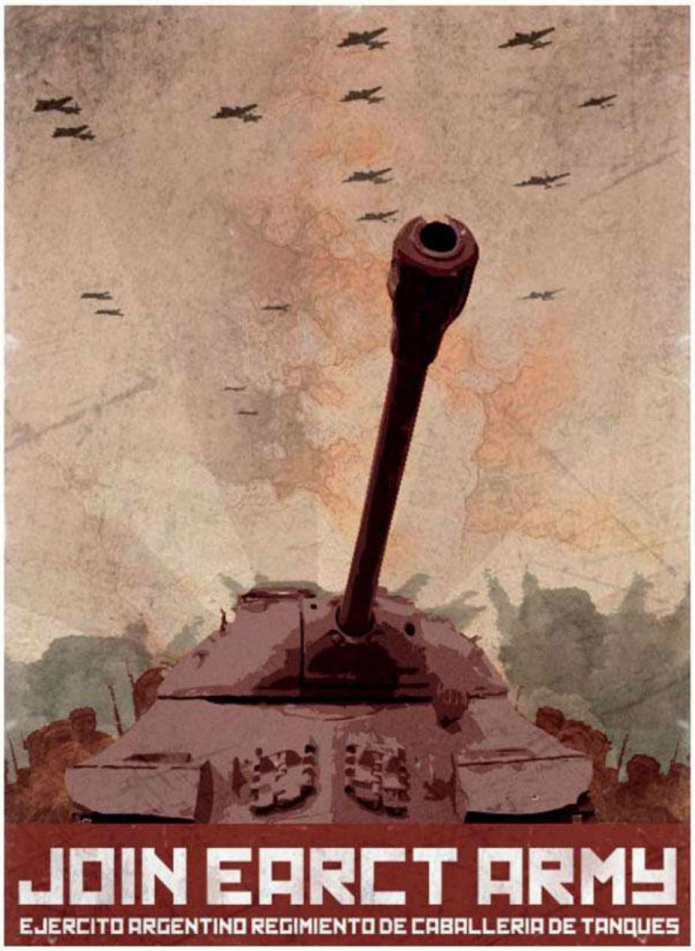












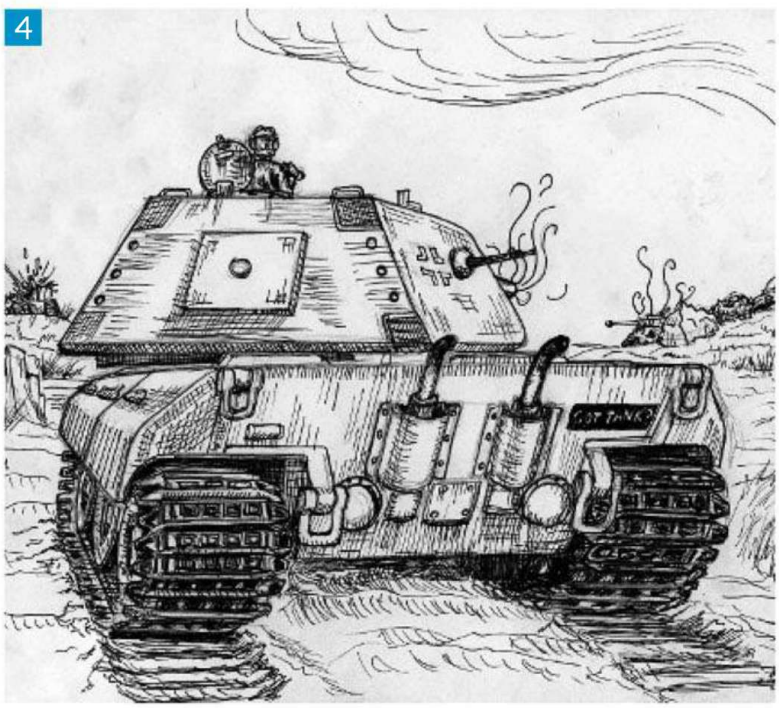
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BLACK AND WHITE







DETAILS 1 **Baptism** by Jack Holliday 2 **Battle at Sand River** by JShank117 3 **E-50 Sniping** by JGrommok 4 **Fear the KVs** by JLEMONed

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ANIME/CARTOON









DETAILS 1 **Desert Leel** by Kirochef 2 **Winter War** by The_Synchronizer 3 **Weapon Anthropomorphism** by BlueMachine 4 **Springtime for Fräulein** by Munnstopable

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MODELS/LEGO

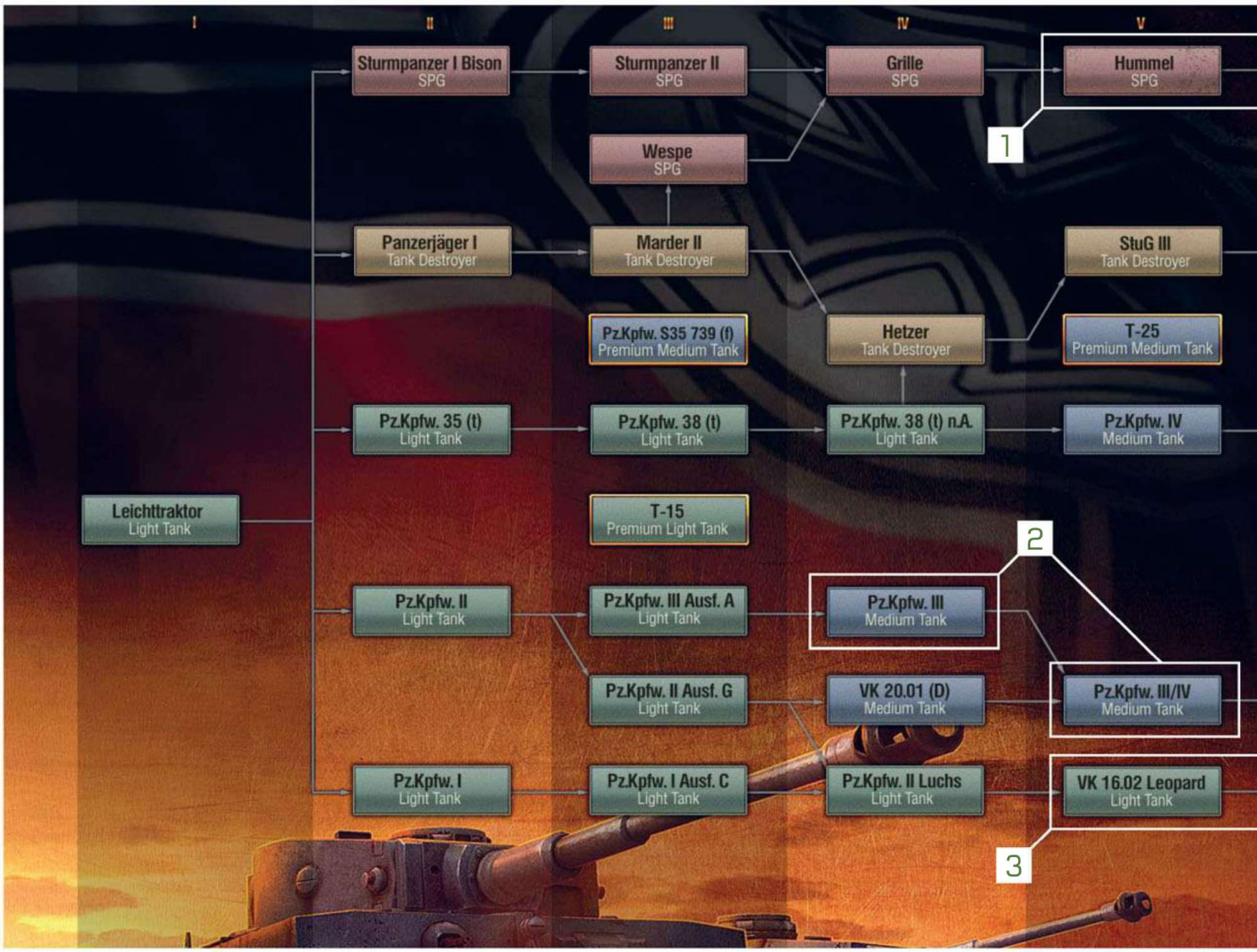




DETAILS 1 **PzKpfw II** by slaaneesh 2 **Renault FT-17** by Plumber_Story 3 **Stug III Ausf G** by Seven7Lucky9 4 **GW Tiger** by Anon 5 **E-25** by Julian Dace

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Tech tree analysis



1 HUMMEL, GW TYP E

Mid to late tier German SPGs are huge, with both gigantic cannons and vast hulls designed to support them. This makes them easy to spot on the battlefield, and necessitates a brazen playstyle. Although not exactly well-armoured in comparison with the game's medium or heavy tanks, German SPGs tend to be tougher to bring down than their peers from other countries. Their sheer size often makes them slow, too, making them sitting ducks if your foes break through your defensive line.

2 PZKPFW III, IV



Mid-tier German medium tanks aren't the out-and-out snipers of the tech tree's later tiers; nor are they the brawler scouts of early tiers. They're closest to the USSR's mid-tier mediums, able to hold their own in most conflicts around tier V, with enough speed to escape trouble, armour to deflect shots and firepower to put an average enemy down. A lack of specialisation allows German tank drivers to decide their path after testing their strengths on the field of battle.

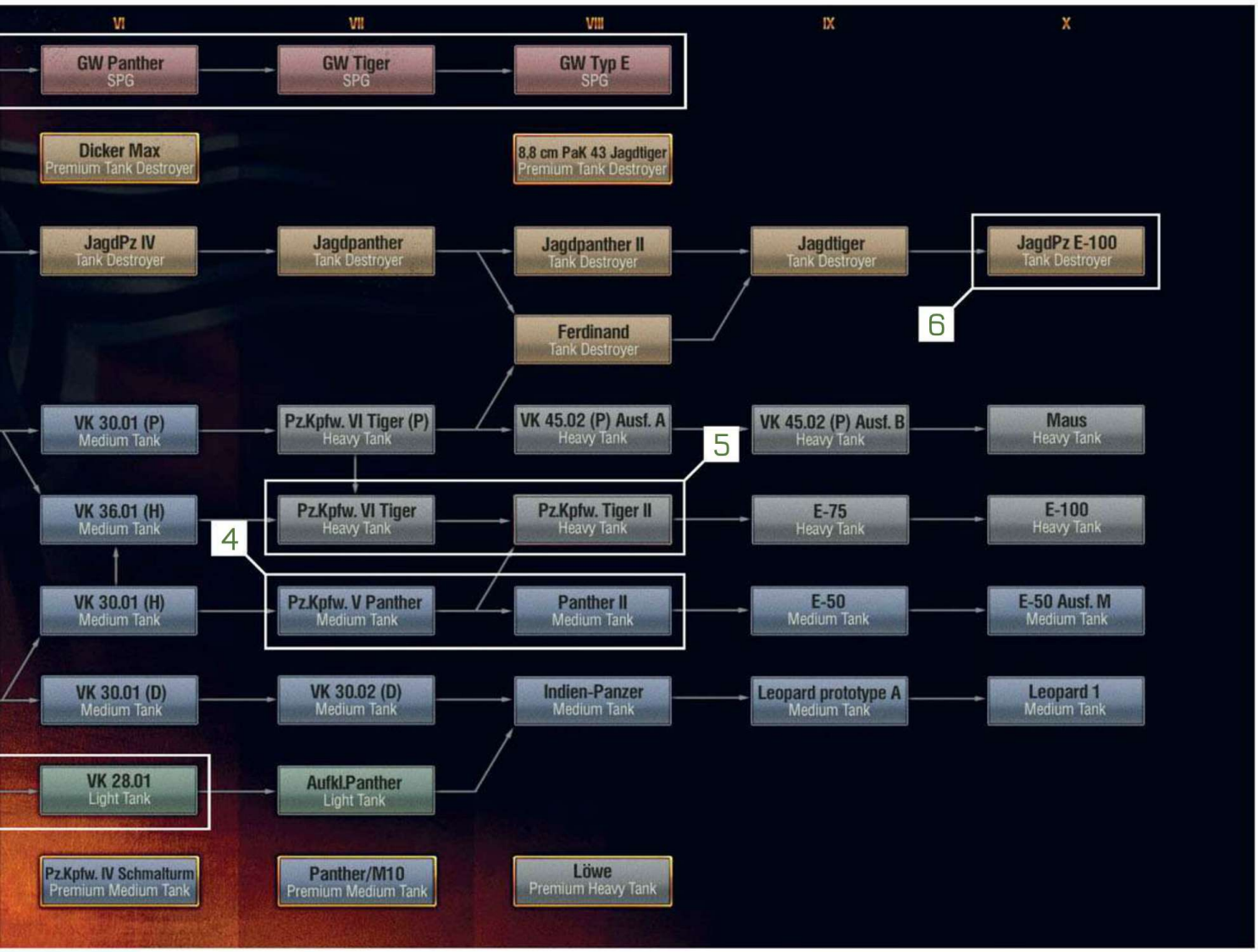
3 LEOPARD, VK 2801

Moderately thick armour allows German light tanks to be bullish. Where tanks like the Soviet T-50 are dedicated scouts, German machines like the Leopard can contribute to fights, flanking from advanced positions and attacking rear armour. They're not as speedy as some of the other mid tier light tanks, but they don't need to be when they can take a hit or two without crumpling. Tanks like the VK 2801 are at their best marauding around your enemy's base, offing self-propelled guns and tank destroyers.

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GERMANY

German tanks tend to be big. Really big. The iconic Maus dwarfs most other in-game vehicles, and gives a clue as to the Germans' best asset: their super armour. Teutonic vehicles can usually take a hit, before striking back with their exceptionally accurate weapons.



4 PANTHER, PANTHER II

Many German medium tanks make excellent snipers. The two Panther tanks, particularly at tiers VII and VIII, are designed to scan the field and take potshots at wounded foes with their high-accuracy, high-penetration cannons. Acceptable frontal armour means both Panthers can be more mobile than dedicated tank destroyers, too, using a decently powerful engine to chase reversing foes down village streets or making for a ridge to reposition and find a new target.

5 TIGER I, II

The heavy Tiger, like many German medium tanks, makes for a great sniper thanks to its accurate cannon. Its advanced Tiger II model – a tier VIII heavy – supplements that handy weapon with excellent frontal armour, capable of deflecting shots fired at mid-range. Later heavy tanks keep this armour setup, being well protected on the front but weak at the side. That is, until you get to the tier X Maus tank, which is coated in pleasingly thick armour all the way around.



6 JAGDPZ E-100

Nothing epitomises the German tech tree's sheer size like JagdPz E-100. It's obscenely huge, bigger than train carriages and unable to hide behind all but the biggest chunks of cover. Its size means it's hardly mobile, but it makes up for its battlefield visibility and sluggish pace with good armour and a lethal cannon. The E-100's picked up the nickname 'Death Star' for its size and weaponry: it's the most powerful available outside of SPG armaments, and will seriously hurt most targets with ease.

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WINGS OF GLORY

It's the airborne MMO we've been waiting for. Look to the skies: **WORLD OF WARPLANES** is coming in fast.

About five minutes into the demonstration, I started to wonder if it would be rude to mention that I was feeling a little queasy.

It was hardly my fault. It wasn't my idea to project live *World of Warplanes* onto an entire wall of the conference room. And it wasn't my idea to fly right into the middle of one of *World of Warplane*'s 15x15km maps and engage in a tight dogfight. In a flimsy biplane. Upside down.

That was all development director Oleg Gotynyan's doing. He took the controls to give me an overview of how *Warplanes* works, but anyone who's played *World of Tanks* would instantly recognise the formula. Two teams of 15 planes spawn in midair at either end of one of four massive starting maps. After a short countdown, the teams charge toward each other and

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"History's greatest air fighters are a true marvel: beautiful and deadly"

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World of Warplanes



In real life, we'd be *way* too scared to fly in this...

fight until every plane on one side has been blown up. If you're shot down, you're out. You can jump into a different battle with another plane, but your damaged fighter will remain on the battlefield until the round is finished and you can retrieve it for repairs. Like *World of Tanks*, it's free to play, and every battle generates experience that can be used to upgrade your collection of warbirds.

Flying start

I knew all this, but it wasn't until I saw the horizon cartwheeling across that white painted wall that I realised why Wargaming's next project could outshine their wildly successful *World of Tanks*.

After all, tanks are brutal, highly-engineered war machines, but they look almost clumsy compared with the most basic combat aircraft. History's greatest air fighters are beautiful and deadly. Forget heavy armour and artillery, planes are just *better*.

Art director Vlad Belozerov wouldn't be drawn on the planes vs tanks debate, but was enthusiastic about the allure of war at 20,000ft. "Air battles are very romantic," he said. "Man-to-man combat, up in the air, high risk. That's an epic thing."

He's right. I can't help but think of the tales of dashing duels between Allied pilots and the Red Baron during World War I. The very sight of the bright liveries and juddering propellers of *Warplanes*' early fighters fills my head with images of the original flying aces blasting through the clouds, goggles down and scarves flapping in the wind.

There's a rich, pulpy vein of air combat lore to be tapped here, but Wargaming's ambition goes beyond the simple twist, loop and shoot biplane battles of the 1930s. As you level up, you unlock more modern craft. By tier ten you'll have your own flying museum, models stretching from early WWI fighters to jets such as the F-86 that gained notoriety during the Korean War.

It's a flight enthusiast's dream. Every plane has been painstakingly modelled with reference to original design documents and historical sources. Wargaming have formed a network of historical consultants who offer advice about the precise plane configurations used during different time periods. They've collected reference materials for the various alternative fuselages, cockpits, landing gear and weapons that were fitted to each plane during its active service history. Those tweaks and alterations feature in each craft's upgrade tree. If you

STRANGE SCIENCE Bringing the pancake plane to life



1 A Moscow professor and a small team of web researchers dig out original source documents for history's most experimental aviation designs.

2 Using photographs and video, the team build multiple versions of each craft in the Bigworld engine. These iterations reflect fuselage upgrades bought in-game.

3 Multiple colour schemes are researched. Wargaming hope to let players buy new liveries with in-game experience and real money.

4 The craft's historical strengths and weaknesses are translated into in-game stats. The F5U has decent speed, but is terrible at turning.

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Oodles more nations are available from the get-go than *WoT*.



Soaring above the verdant fields like Biggles – spiffing stuff.

buy an upgrade to your plane's bodywork, the changes you see will represent a version of the plane that really existed. This attention to detail has been applied to every aspect.

"We pay a lot of attention to the historical accuracy of our planes," lead designer Ivan Kulbich told me. "Our idea is to make sure the people who really like history and really like planes can be certain that this model looks like it does in real life. All our camouflage and paint is authentic."

In-flight entertainment

Currently, *World of Warplanes* features 59 aircraft. Russian, German and United States planes are represented, and more nations and planes will be added in the run up to launch. The developers have already reached back into the most obscure corners of aviation history to fill out their roster. Experimental craft like the bright yellow F5U (a boxy, propeller-driven flying squirrel the devs have dubbed the 'pancake plane') bring a pleasing dose of weirdness to the lineup. Historical accuracy is useful up to a point, but Wargaming don't want that to stop players from flying their favourite planes. As in *World of Tanks*, players won't be divided by the nationality of their machines.

"Every battle generates experience used to upgrade your collection of warbirds"

Each 15-pilot squad represents a dream team of the strangest and most influential air fighters of their generation, and each one has its own statistical strengths and weaknesses. Some fighters have greater turning speed, others have a higher max speed, some accelerate well and others climb better. A twin-engine monster will never get a bead on a lithe single-engine dogfighter, but it can use its superior speed to boost away and come back for a fresh attack. Every manoeuvre has a counter. It's like a massive game of aeronautical Top Trumps.

Each aircraft's role is broadly defined by its class. There are three. Light fighters are like irrepressible airborne terriers with guns coming out of their faces. They jet towards the middle of the map and start fighting immediately, looking for an opportunity to peel off and hunt larger craft. Heavy fighters are the loping, angry Dobermans of the skies. They circle the central fight looking for long lines of attack. When they have a good angle, they plough straight through dogfights,

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World of Warplanes


Visually, it's a beaut. Reflections a go-go.

chewing up light aircraft with powerful cannons on the way in and activating afterburners on the way out to lose any planes on their tails.

Meanwhile, ground attack aircraft lumber around the map like huge, adorable Saint Bernards with bellies full of bombs. Their great cannons make them dangerous prey for lighter aircraft, but their main objective is to use their payload to obliterate such ground targets as anti-aircraft guns, tanks and boats.

Blowing up these NPC-manned objectives generates points that accelerate your team's progress along a tug-of-war victory bar at the top of the screen. If one team completely dominates that bar they win, even if there are enemy planes left on the map. This stops situations where a powerful squadron must chase one stray whippet round and round a map for ages at the end of a battle. The locations of ground targets are randomised, so they have to be scouted out before bombers can attack. Wargaming hope that this will encourage fights to spring up around different areas as light aircraft swarm to protect ground troops.

Vlad admitted that the maps were a big technical challenge for the design team, but hinted at some interesting additions for future updates. Ground targets are static at the moment, but there are plans to include mobile anti-air turrets and roving ground troops to give bombers more of a challenge, and to generate a sense of an ongoing conflict in the world below. Cloud cover will give stealthy pilots cover from which to ambush unsuspecting bombers, and provide vital escape routes for light fighters that have picked up a tail.

Those map additions, the broad class system and the individuality of each plane will keep players interested for weeks on end, but no matter how complex and well-balanced, *World of Warplanes* will win and lose players based on one vital factor: does it feel good to fly?

That slightly unsettled feeling I had watching Oleg's biplane spiral into combat proves that Wargaming have already captured some of the drama and faint nausea of flying upside down in a flimsy canvas bucket, but the build I played struggled to deliver the precision needed

DEV TALK



Victor Kislyi
CEO, Wargaming

***World of Warplanes* looks set to do for aircraft what *World of Tanks* did for armour...**
Yes, and it's important to understand that we want to concentrate on air combat enthusiasts. We want to go to air shows. We want to go to air museums. We want to talk to people who fly those hardcore flight simulations. There's a lot of enthusiasm about warplanes and World War II in Russia, Europe, Britain – and the US too.

Is it even more of a challenge to create a flight sim rather than a tank sim?
Possibly. With aeroplanes you are in 3D, you have to be moving all the time, like a shark, and you have to have 3D vision in your head, unlike tanks. That's quite a challenge.

An aeroplane is more difficult than a tank to control, obviously. There are many more drivers than pilots on this planet. That's where we put a lot of good people, trying out different controls, different twists in the flight model itself. If you look at the cockpit of any plane, you see a lot of controllers. We don't want people to have to switch on all of those.

Creating a balance that will appeal to sim enthusiasts, as well as more casual gamers, must be tricky?
First it has to be a good simulator – not too hardcore so that it takes you 30 minutes to take off, and then you crash-land after a successful mission – but not too arcade-like.

It also has to be historically realistic in terms of models, engines, internal components and relative parameters of different aeroplanes and different nations – and, of course, it has to be well balanced. Yet the gameplay, the flight mode and the controls, they have to be somewhere in the middle – in that sweet spot – so that normal people can play.

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Imagine dog fights in these ravines, swooping about – guns blazing.

to nail enemy aircraft that should have been sitting ducks.

World of Tanks thrived because of its straightforward interface and easily mastered controls. *World of Warplanes* will have to match those standards if it hopes to gain a similar following.

That's no easy task. In *World of Tanks* you can rumble up to a bush, park inside and snipe your way to victory. In *Warplanes*, every contest is a tumble through a three-dimensional space. Every twist and turn must factor in the power of each plane's engines, its wingspan, manoeuvrability and, of course, gravity. How do you model all that, and still make the planes easy to fly?

"The most difficult part is finding this edge between realism and arcade, and adding proper controls on top of it," Kulbich explained as I barrel-rolled about. "It's not like a singleplayer game where you can calculate everything on your PC and have instant response. All operation is done server-side."

Taking off

Initial experiments with *World of Warplanes* quickly highlighted this problem. Internally, the developers referred to *Warplane*'s early dogfights as 'player versus ground' battles. Every overly ambitious manoeuvre resulted in a fatal tailspin. They've come a long way from those early fights, but it's been a long, iterative and at times arduous process. The default mouse control scheme I played still felt frustratingly jittery and imprecise at time, but it's a problem that the team are working hard to correct.

Thousands of players are flooding into the beta right now, but there's much still to be added to *World of Warplanes*. New vehicles, maps and nations will arrive in time, but we'll also see features that haven't yet appeared in *World of Tanks*. Tutorial missions will give players a place to fly and to learn the role of each class. Wargaming hope to extend these into a series of PvE missions that will enable players to form wings and take on hordes of NPC opponents in cooperative battles.

"It's a high-action counterfoil to one of the biggest free-to-play games in the world"

A version of *World of Tank*'s global clan warfare system is also in the works. That will give players the chance to join a clan and fight for territory on a geopolitical map of Europe.

If they can get it right, *World of Warplanes* could be brilliant. It borrows much from *World of Tanks* but feels so different, and is reactive, fast and explosive. It's a high-action counterfoil to one of the biggest free-to-play games in the world. If you've ever gazed into the sky, marvelled at the majesty of a vapour trail and wondered "what if?", you just might like it. ■


Imagine *World of Planes* with the Oculus Rift – yes please.


Factors like sun glare will affect your flying.


Ah, a tropical paradise – romantic, isn't it?

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Tank in Focus



TIGER II

DETAILS ◆ **Name** PzKpfw Tiger II ◆ **Nationality** German ◆ **Class** Heavy ◆ **Crew** 5 ◆ **Hit Points** 1500 ◆ **Speed Limit** 28km/h ◆ **Tier** VIII ◆ **Cost** 2,450,000

At a glance

Pros

- Excellent view range (400m with 100% crew)
- Good turret traverse and speedy aim time (2.3 seconds)
- Very accurate for a tier VIII
- Prized ability to rotate in place
- Pretty good gun depression for German model
- Shell penetration that's on par with the Soviet IS-3's feared BL-9 gun
- Adequate stock gun that's arguably better than the first upgraded variant (105mm L/52), boasting cheaper ammo costs, greater accuracy and a better rate of fire – at the cost of causing slightly less damage

Cons

- Low top speed (a mere 28km/h, the lowest of the tier VIII tanks)
- High silhouette make it easy to spot
- Low alpha, expensive 105mm shells
- Average one-hit damage (only 320 points)
- Side-scraping not as potent as the Tiger I
- Engine can get damaged or easily catch fire after taking hits to the tank's lower glacis



The harsh lines and stark colours defined the Tiger II.



Decent gun depression and solid accuracy heralds a decent sniper.



The Tiger II is *slow*, so beware straying into open terrain – like this chap.

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During the first half of World War II German forces experienced major difficulties when facing opposition French, British and Soviet tanks like Matildas, Churchills and KVs boasting anti-shell armour.

Turning to anti-aircraft guns for inspiration when crafting the first Tiger, German engineers perfected their tech on the fearsome tank destroyers Ferdinand and JagdPanther, as well as the now-iconic Tiger II – it boasted a powerful 88mm cannon with a barrel length of 71 calibers.

With its armour-penetrating, rapid-fire 'long arm' that could strike any Allied tank up to a kilometre away, the Tiger II proved a fearsome opponent until the climax of the war – and arguably as much of a psychological terror as a physical one.

Here's how to dominate your opponents with it in *World of Tanks*.



COMBAT TACTICS
STUDY THESE PRO TACTICS TO MASTER THE **TIGER II**



City Slicker
The Tiger II is ideally deployed on city maps, providing you assume tactical positions that protect its vulnerable lower armour plate. These hiding spots can include a mound, a vehicle, a destroyed tank's hull etc. If you're one of the lower tier armours in the battle it's worth hunkering in behind beefier comrades. If you get separated, head for the nearest piece of cover and prepare to engage any opposing light/medium tanks, while monitoring their possible avenues of approach. If you can't spot any obvious threats to your artillery, move to a safe zone and help repel the offence of the opposing team.



Armour Geddon
If your Tiger II is one of the higher tier tanks in the battle, take advantage of its superiority in terms of armour. Play aggressively and set the attack agenda, but don't forget to protect your tracks and vulnerable lower plate. More open maps present difficulties in this respect; the poor speed and middling mobility of the Tiger II often makes it an easy target for enemy artillery.



Speed Matters
The Tiger II's painfully slow speed and sluggish manoeuvrability are its biggest disadvantages. You'll need to clearly identify which position(s) you'll have time to assume before you are spotted, so either ensure you either know the layout of maps in current rotation or use the 30 second countdown to battle to scope out a destination. Also, don't simply rush the enemy at the onset of combat!



Turret's Syndrome
Take advantage of your accurate gun turret and high view range. When facing off against rival heavy tanks at a distance place your vehicle at an angle to form a diamond-like shape. If the opponent aims for the lower armour plate then increase the angle; if they decide to shoot at your side quickly return to the starting position. Rinse and repeat for an effective defensive strategy.



Stay on Track
When duelling light/medium tanks it's tricky to protect your weakly armoured sides and rear: agile opponents will circle you. To counter situations like these, firstly hinder your opponent by disabling its tracks. Secondly, keep your rear end pushed against an obstacle – this will reduce your 'kill zone'. Thirdly, attempt to increase enemies' movement radius by constantly moving in the opposite direction.



Clench Warfare Pt. 1
If you find yourself in a clench, remember that opponents with high gun elevation arc numbers can target your glacis plate at an almost 90° angle. So, even at close distance, try to place your tank in a diamond shape and swing your hull and turret – this makes it harder to target any weak points. It is best to aim for either the upper part of a foe's turret, protruding parts of the hull or the commander's hatch. Remember that similar tier opponents will probably try to increase the distance to survive: do not allow that to happen.



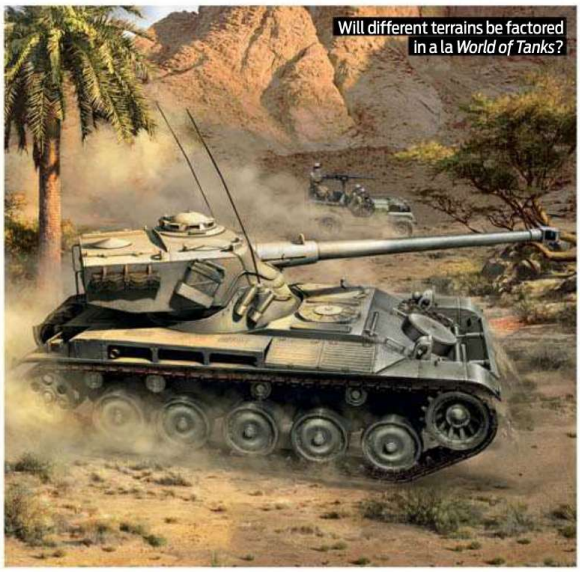
Clench Warfare Pt. 2
When facing higher tier heavy tanks there's no point in clenching as foes can penetrate the Tiger II's meagre armour. Instead, retreat to a covered position and attack once entrenched. It's a different story with low-level enemies – but protect your machine-gun mount and commander's hatch.

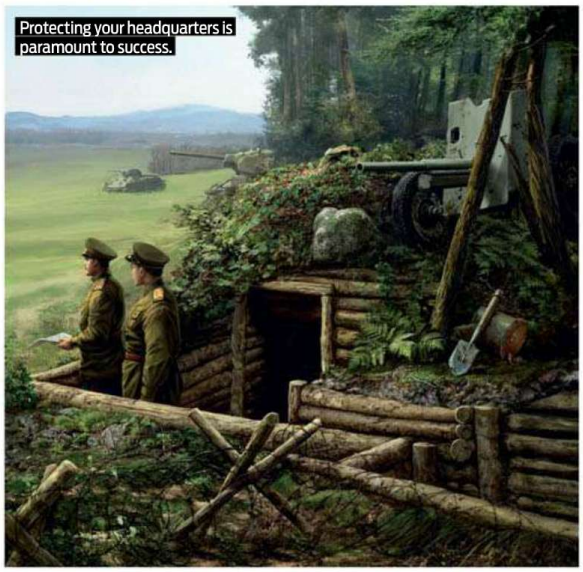


Mod Rockers
Opt for Rammer, Stabiliser and Coated Optics modules. Choose Sixth Sense for commanders, Dead Eye for gunners, Preventative Maintenance for radio operators, Dead Eye and Situational Awareness for drivers and Safe Stowage for loaders. Firefighting is a solid third skill for the entire crew.

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World of Tanks: Generals


Will different terrains be factored in a la *World of Tanks*?


Protecting your headquarters is paramount to success.

BOMB THE BASE
The ultimate object of each battle is to destroy your opponent's headquarters. Each has its own unique number of defence points, while platoons can be stationed in adjacent squares to boost HQ stats.

12

POKER FACE

Caterpillar tracks meet playing cards in **WORLD OF TANKS: GENERALS**. Deal.

You may not be aware, but Wargaming has a stellar board game heritage. Even though the company has latterly gone on to experience vast success with *World of Tanks* it's somehow fitting that there remains a place in their hearts for a more old fashioned, tactile experience, even if their Tank Top Trumps will be browser and tablet-based rather than, well… *playground*-based.

An asymmetrical, grid and turn-based battler of formidable strategic depth, 220 cards are planned for launch. You'll unlock the majority of those by levelling up and progressing down a tech tree, but there'll also be premium cards on offer that are purchasable with real currency.

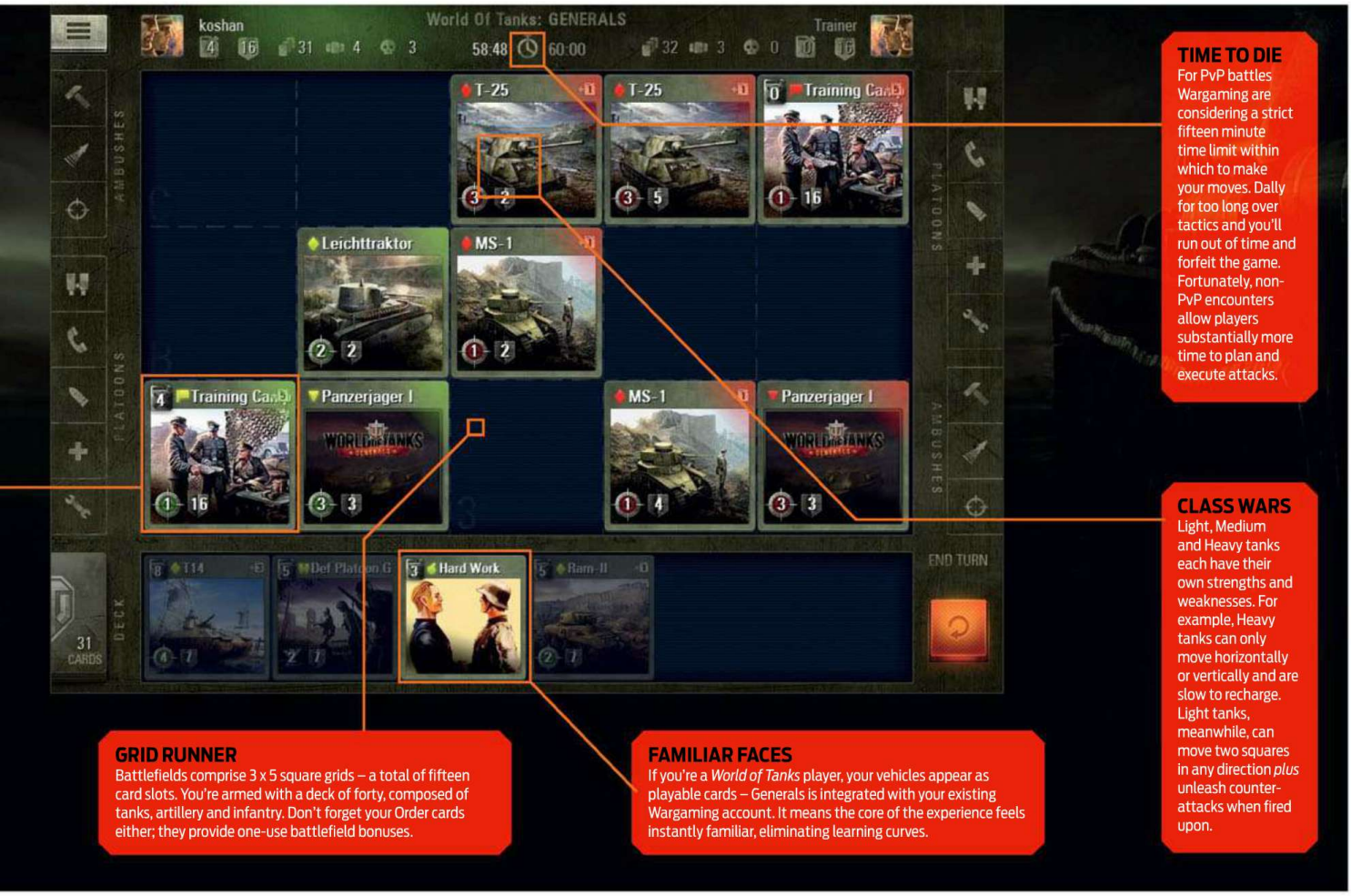
So how does it actually play? As with *World of Tanks* proper, there's a definite leaning towards seriousness, realism and authentic tactics. Forward planning, synergy between units and positioning are in; Charge of the Light Brigade-style suicide missions are out. Players are tasked with defending a headquarters piece located on diagonally opposite corners of a grid… then it's time to go to war.

Card Sharp

Your forty-strong deck consists of tanks, artillery and infantry – plus special bonus cards that grant players extra firepower or defences. Light, Medium and Heavy tanks will comprise the majority of your deck. Platoons will provide buffs, while bonus Order cards operate in a similar way to *Magic: The Gathering*'s Instants – wield

"The game is a concoction that's more explosive than a Russian Molotov cocktail"

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TIME TO DIE
For PvP battles Wargaming are considering a strict fifteen minute time limit within which to make your moves. Dally for too long over tactics and you'll run out of time and forfeit the game. Fortunately, non-PvP encounters allow players substantially more time to plan and execute attacks.

CLASS WARS
Light, Medium and Heavy tanks each have their own strengths and weaknesses. For example, Heavy tanks can only move horizontally or vertically and are slow to recharge. Light tanks, meanwhile, can move two squares in any direction *plus* unleash counter-attacks when fired upon.

GRID RUNNER
Battlefields comprise 3 x 5 square grids – a total of fifteen card slots. You're armed with a deck of forty, composed of tanks, artillery and infantry. Don't forget your Order cards either; they provide one-use battlefield bonuses.

FAMILIAR FACES
If you're a *World of Tanks* player, your vehicles appear as playable cards – Generals is integrated with your existing Wargaming account. It means the core of the experience feels instantly familiar, eliminating learning curves.

them at any time for an immediate effect.

Most innovative is *Generals*' Ambush mechanic. If you're a particularly sneaky type of warmonger, there'll be opportunities to play cards face down, which will flip when certain battle conditions are met. The results can seismically shift the tide of battle. It's basically the equivalent of hiding a Maus in some bushes, before popping out to say 'guten Tag!' with a 128mm canon.

With a raft of single and PvP options – including taking part in iconic historical battles or scrapping for dominance on a global map – *Generals* will carry on Wargaming's tradition of integrated game modes aplenty. It's early days, but we wouldn't be surprised if – given the existence of *World of Warplanes* and *World of Warships* – Wargaming might eventually assimilate air and sea support into *Generals*. For the moment though, that's merely wishful thinking.

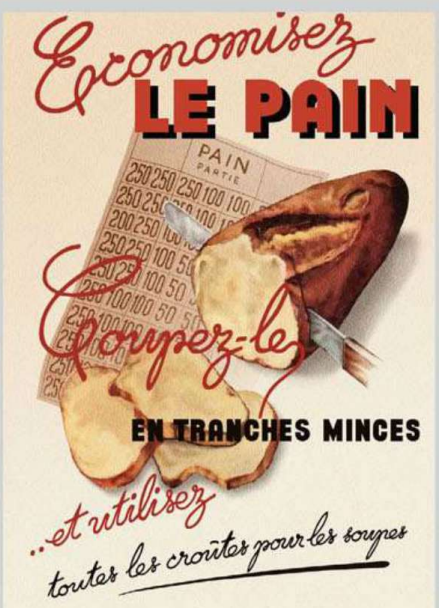
Summoner Wars meets *Magic: The Gathering* meets *World of Tanks* then... a heady concoction that's more explosive than a Russian Molotov. Wargaming is onto something special here; we'll find out more as the year progresses.

PROPER GANDER A glimpse at *Generals*' artwork...

Generals' art is gritty and realistic – in keeping with *World of Tanks*. However, these gorgeous retro 'propaganda' pieces are being used for publicity. Might they be factored into the game somehow?







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Famous battle

THE BATTLE OF KURSK



Need to know

Who
Germans vs Soviets

When
5 July – 24 August 1943

Where
Kursk, Soviet Union

The Battle of Kursk took place in July 1943. It was to be the supreme clash of armours in World War II, the most renowned tank battle in military history and arguably the pivotal blow against Nazi Germany's ill-fated incursion into depths of the Soviet Union.

'Operation Barbarossa' had proved the devastating power of armoured warfare; initial German *Blitzkriegs* onto Soviet soil were massacres, as the Nazi war machine rode roughshod over its technologically inferior Russian opponents. Yet despite rapid progress east, the fierce Russian winter slowed the Germans – as did spirited Soviet resistance at Stalingrad between August 1942 and February 1943. The Wehrmacht beat a semi-retreat.

German High Command was concerned. Sandwiched between overrun Western Russia and the relative safety of Eastern Europe lay ranks of newly-rallied Soviet partisans, ready to ambush any receding Germans. The decision – based on both military and political factors – was made to push on and finally crush the Russian spirit once and for all, as well as hopefully ostracising them from their western allies. To do so would require a display of overwhelming force, an event Hitler himself boasted would "shine like a beacon around the world". The seeds of Kursk were sown.

Tiger Style

By summer 1943, both the Wehrmacht and Luftwaffe were in rude health. For instance, in 1942 Germany produced 5,700 medium/heavy tanks; by 1943 this had increased to 11,900. Plane production had doubled during the same period, while ammunition manufacture had trebled. New armour had also entered the fray – among them the fearsome Tiger, Tiger II and Panther. With France kowtowed and Britain only reachable by Luftwaffe raids, two-thirds of the German Army were hunkered in the Soviet Union by August.

After their success at Stalingrad, the Red Army had pushed the Germans back west. However, a bulge had occurred south of Orel and north of Kharkov – with Kursk dead centre. So it was that 'Operation Citadel' manifested to eliminate this bulge, with 900,000 troops, 10,000 artillery guns, 2,700 tanks and 2,000 aircraft concentrated in the area. General Friedrich von Mellenthin would later recall: "no offensive was ever prepared as carefully as this one."

However, Russia's military leaders were similarly primed. Russian forces were gauged at three million troops, 20,000 artillery guns, 3,600 tanks and 2,400 planes. They decided to form an impenetrable wall upon which wave after wave of German attacks would break and flounder, thus gradually eroding both the spirit and sheer numbers of the massed Wehrmacht. The Soviet generals were

THE BATTLE'S KEY TANK

THE REVOLUTIONARY **T-34** WAS THE SOVIET SAVIOUR AT KURSK

Although the T-70 was well represented at Kursk, the T-34 was the star of the show. Its revolutionary sloping armour and thick frontal plate delivered a defensive system able to deflect antitank fire with minimal damage. This proved vital during the four brutal German attempts to ram through the Russian defensive line. Whenever a T-34 fell, another soon appeared to replace it.





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The Soviet T-34/76 tank ruled the roost at Kursk.

Rokossovsky and Vatutin, while the man charged with leading any potential counter-offensive was the master of *maskirovka* (the use of military camouflage and deception), Koniev. The legendary General Georgy Zhukov largely oversaw the operation.

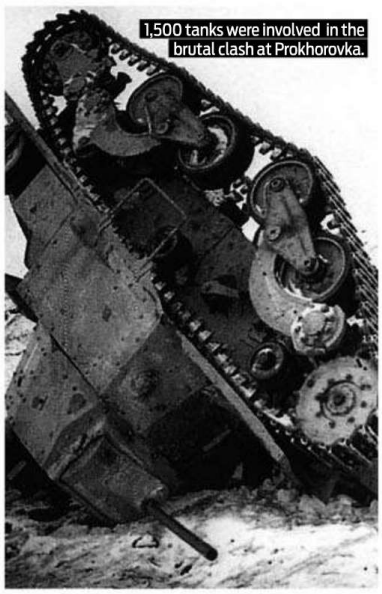
Mine Craft

The initiative naturally fell with the Germans, since it was they who intended to 'break' the bulge, so the Soviets were able to lay a series of traps – including the laying of an incredible 400,000 anti-tank and anti-personnel mines. In addition, an incredible 300,000 civilians were recruited to assist developing defences around the Kursk salient, including repairing 1,800 miles of road and digging thousands of miles of trenches.

With captured German PoWs leaking the rumoured date of the German attack commencement, the Soviets unleashed a devastating, sustained artillery bombardment at 02:00 on 5 July. Germany replied at 04:30 with an artillery barrage, followed by tank, infantry and air surges at 05:30. In the ensuing week, the Wehrmacht threatened to break though the defender's ranks four times; each times it was repulsed. Ferocious German attacks were met by equally ferocious Soviet defence, with massive casualties sustained on both sides.

WWII's most famous tank battle occurred on 12 July. In total, 1,500 tanks were involved at Prokhorovka, 50 miles to the south-east of Kursk. By nightfall, the crestfallen Germans finally paused to take breath: they had lost 350 tanks and 10,000 men. Buoyed, the Red Army, assisted by the Russian Air Force, launched a colossal counter-offensive – by 23 July the Wehrmacht was back where it started, and by 5 August was ceding ground (and key occupied cities like Orel) with each passing day. Eventually Nazi forces, hamstrung after Russian partisans derailed large numbers of troop trains, withdrew back to the Hagen Line.

23 August was to effectively prove the end of the Battle of Kursk, as the Russian city of Kharkov was liberated from German forces. It was to prove a shattering blow for Hitler and his army; they were scattered, demoralised and would never again mount a major offensive on Russian soil. Indeed, Kursk proved the catalyst for the Soviet drive into mainland Europe and the eventual invasion and capture of Berlin. The troop, tank, artillery and plane toll on both sides was appalling, yet out of the slaughter arguably arose the beginnings of the end of World War II. ■


1,500 tanks were involved in the brutal clash at Prokhorovka.

BATTLE QUOTES

"Soldiers of the Reich! This day you are to take part in an offensive of such importance that the whole future of the war may depend on its outcome. Your victory will show the world that resistance to the power of the German Army is hopeless."

ADOLF HITLER
GERMAN FÜHRER

"[At Kursk] the faith of the German Army and the German people in the Nazi leadership and Germany's ability to withstand the growing might of the Soviet Union was shattered."

GEORGY ZHUKOV
SOVIET GENERAL

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Top 10

TANK DESTROYERS



10 Renault UE57

Overview

Best at
Sniping. A powerful gun and a quick reload mean the UE57 excels at extreme range, supporting your team from afar.

Worst at
Armour. The UE57 might as well be covered in fur for all the protection it provides against incoming fire. Hide well.

This cute little tank destroyer has earned the nickname 'the rat' owing to its rather dinky size. It's one of the very smallest machines available in game, and it won't be ramming any heavy tanks any time soon, but what the UE57 loses in size, it makes up for in crazy firepower. Its gun is surprisingly powerful, able to make short work of similar tier light tanks. The combination of miniature size and nippy speed means it can also get the jump on enemies and squeeze a few shots off before they can pull themselves together and, inevitably, squash this rat underfoot.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 4 ◆ **Hit Points** 150 ◆ **Speed Limit** 36 km/h ◆ **Tier** III ◆ **Cost** 42,500

9 SU-100M1

Overview

Best at
Covering. Stick with a group of bigger boys for protection, hopping out to deliver finishing blows on weak side armour.

Worst at
Sniping. The SU-100M1's gun isn't the strongest and won't penetrate thick armour from afar.

SU-100M1 drivers might find their vehicle feels more like a medium than a tank destroyer. The Soviet machine has pace and agility to keep up with faster machines – handy, because they're the kind of company this model should keep. It works best in a pack, skulking behind bigger medium-sized pals and taking potshots at peek-a-booing foes. It's not got the most powerful gun, but when you're rolling with a crew, you'll find yourself shooting at panicking, reversing targets and racking up easy kills.



DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 4 ◆ **Hit Points** 830 ◆ **Speed Limit** 50 km/h ◆ **Tier** VII ◆ **Cost** 1,365,000

8 M18 Hellcat



Overview

Best at
Ambushes. Use the Hellcat's fantastic top speed to set up shop overlooking regular enemy thoroughfares.

Worst at
Armour. The Hellcat's armour is weak, and its open top makes it an easy kill for a self-propelled gun's HE shell.

The Hellcat earns its name from its pace: it moves like lightning, hitting a 72km/h top speed across flat land. Its speed, coupled with its shape, means that you might be tempted to play the Hellcat as a normal tank. Don't. Use your speed to get into ambush positions, and pummel unsuspecting targets as they come into range with your comparatively powerful cannon.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 5 ◆ **Hit Points** 550 ◆ **Speed Limit** 72 km/h ◆ **Tier** VI ◆ **Cost** 950,000

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7 Tortoise

Overview

Best at
Armour. The Tortoise's shell is tough to crack from all sides, meaning it can take a few hits from opposition tanks.

Worst at
Speed. It's about as slow as a real life tortoise, and its wide base means it won't be squeezing into any tight gaps.

Like its reptilian namesake, the Tortoise has one heck of a thick shell. It's a flat machine, and its excellent armour makes it much tougher than most tank destroyers – especially when combined with its large health pool. Whereas other destroyers are often most effective when hanging back and sniping from afar, the Tortoise is able to lead from the front, its thick armour absorbing hits as its powerful cannon dishes them out. Be sure to roll with a pack of friends, though – get flanked and the Tortoise is in trouble, being too slow to bring its forward-facing gun to bear on other vehicles.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 6 ◆ **Hit Points** 2,000 ◆ **Speed Limit** 20 km/h ◆ **Tier** IX ◆ **Cost** 3,500,000



6 T95

Overview

Best at
Sniping. The T95's cannon is brilliant: it's powerful and accurate, even if it does take a while to reload.

Worst at
Speed. The T95 is staggeringly slow. Drivers will find battles sometimes finishing before they fire their cannon.

T95 drivers need patience – their machine is the slowest in the game. This tier IX tank destroyer moves at a glacial 13km/h, and that's on a straight. Angle it even slightly uphill, and you'll be lucky if you get to your destination before the war's over. But careful T95 drivers who can anticipate where their enemy will move to, and start trundling there from the onset of the round, will find that their super-slow destroyer boasts one of the best guns in the game. The T95's cannon is capable of smashing through the thickest armour, and can one-shot tanks of lower tiers.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 4 ◆ **Hit Points** 1,700 ◆ **Speed Limit** 13 km/h ◆ **Tier** IX ◆ **Cost** 3,500,000



5 Jagdtiger

The Jagdtiger packs a ridiculously lethal cannon, able to rip through the armour of most tier X tanks without too much fuss, the shells doing massive damage en route. It's an unwieldy beast to control – aesthetic qualities took a backseat to putting out as much damage as possible during its design, and drivers are left with a giant, gently sloping box as their vehicle. But what it lacks in beauty it makes up for in punch: avoid showing weak side and rear armour and fire from afar with a devastatingly accurate, quick firing, and powerful gun, and you've got arguably the best sniper in *World of Tanks*.

Overview

Best at
Sniping. The Jagdtiger's aiming reticule is miniscule, letting you choose your weak spot in precise detail.

Worst at
Agility. It's massive, and boxy, making manoeuvres tricky and dangerous if you're caught out in the open.



That mega cannon spells doom for opponents.

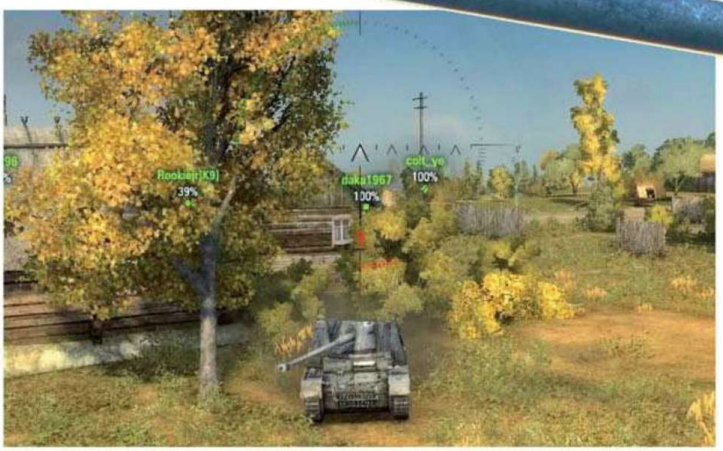


...but it's unwieldy and slow, so stick to cover.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 6 ◆ **Hit Points** 1,800 ◆ **Speed Limit** 28 km/h ◆ **Tier** IX ◆ **Cost** 3,450,000

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Top 10



4 S-35 CA

Overview

Best at
Covering. Sit behind your main attack force, call targets, and pin them down with your powerful cannon.

Worst at
Armour. The bathtub's open top might as well be an invite for self-propelled guns saying "put a shell here".

Ok, so it looks like it's designed more for carrying water around than destroying enemy tanks – hence the *World of Tanks*' community's affectionate 'bathtub' nickname – but this plucky French tank destroyer comes with a great range of weapons, and the view range to pick targets to use them against. It's ideal sat at the back of an advance, calling out targets and peppering them with fire from its cannon. All of its researchable guns have a use, and with the final 90mm cannon, you'll be taking chunks out of tier V medium tank health bars with ease.



DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 4 ◆ **Hit Points** 330 ◆ **Speed Limit** 37 km/h ◆ **Tier** V ◆ **Cost** 403,000

3+ Marder II

Overview

Best at
Covering. The Marder's gun isn't the most accurate, but it hits hard. Travel with the pack and focus down troublesome targets.

Worst at
Sniping. Its gun isn't accurate enough over distance to make the Marder II a true sniper destroyer. Engage at mid range.

The German Marder II is small, with weak armour, but it comes wielding an incredibly good gun. The Deutsch destroyer's upgradeable cannon is capable of making a serious hole in anything tier III or less on the field, destroying many in a single, well-aimed shell. A long reload time means missing a shot is costly, but the Marder's small enough to duck out of trouble in that eventuality. It's a great machine for people learning how best to play tank destroyers, as it works best in a team. Not a lone wolf sniper, the Marder II is best played as part of a wolfpack: move with a group of bigger tanks and set up behind them, poking your nose through the crowd and using your fantastic cannon to finish off unsuspecting enemies.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 3 ◆ **Hit Points** 165 ◆ **Speed Limit** 40 km/h ◆ **Tier** III ◆ **Cost** 42,000



2 Alecto

Overview

Best at
Speed. The Alecto moves fast, meaning you're able to set up firing lanes before your opponents can arrive.

Worst at
Armour. The Alecto's armour is so thin a papercut would penetrate it. Speed is its best defence in all situations.

The Alecto is tiddly-small, but can be upgraded with a turbo-charged engine. This tiny tank destroyer's speed is its best asset, closely followed by its powerful cannon. The former lets it get in sniping spots behind the main force's thrust, while the latter lets it puncture enemies in a few shots. The Alecto is lethal in the right hands, particularly on small maps where your excellent speed lets you hug the edge of the map and hunt both self-propelled guns and other destroyers, killing them in one shot.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 4 ◆ **Hit Points** 270 ◆ **Speed Limit** 50.5 km/h ◆ **Tier** IV ◆ **Cost** 130,000

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The silent assassin, Object 704 is hidden and dangerous.

1

Object 704

Overview

Best at
Camouflage. Object 704 comes dressed in the finest camouflage bonus, meaning it's a good idea to lurk in the bushes.

Worst at
Armour. Even weaker than most tank destroyers, the 704's armour is paper thin. Most of the time, two shots will knock it out.

Named for its factory designation, Object 704 never actually entered active service. That doesn't stop it being a dangerous tank killer in *World of Tanks*, best used as part of a defensive force to stop base-capturing enemy sorties. The 704 has a great camouflage rating, meaning its squashed body blends right in with bushes and trees, assuming you keep out of direct enemy firing lines.

That's a good idea regardless: the 704's armour is weak, even for a tank destroyer, and it doesn't have the raw speed to escape from an opponent that's got it zeroed in. Sit further back instead, and use the 704's powerful gun to punch holes in tanks that come streaming toward your base: the vehicle's gun is good enough that it'll whack straight through the frontal armour of many a medium tank.

Feel free to take shots at heavy tanks, too: the 704's cannon is that good at penetrating thick armour. Just be careful if they start shooting back, and beat a tactical retreat if you're spotted. If your scouts are competent, you'll have a great time using the 704's cannon accuracy to pick off enemy self-propelled guns or tank destroyers, your fearsome weapon regularly knocking them out of the fight in one simple shot and allowing you to rack up a silly number of kills – assuming you stay hidden in the bushes, that is.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 5 ◆ **Hit Points** 1,600 ◆ **Speed Limit** 37 km/h ◆ **Tier** IX ◆ **Cost** 3,660,000

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Interview

DEV TALK



Mike Zhivets
Producer, World of Tanks

How

has *World of Tanks* be able to enjoy so much success?

The game is fun, fairly easy to play, and draws you back with evolving content and a need to get better and better.

Nowadays, most MMO games offer the same repetitive missions that have been around for years. *World of Tanks* stands out by delivering fast and innovative combat on a plate. Players love the ease and quickness of starting a match: whether you have 15 minutes or two hours to play, you can be up and fighting within a minute. Unlike other MMO games where you need to wait at least five minutes to load the initial screen, *World of Tanks* cuts out all the boring stuff and throws you straight into battle.

Accessibility is a huge part of *World of Tanks*' appeal; how do you create that while still retaining tactical depth?

In terms of controls, *World of Tanks* resembles an FPS. It features WASD keys for movement and a mouse for targeting and turret controls. There are no complex schemes to distract you from seeking out and destroying enemies, no complicated targeting mechanics, and no tangled crew management system.

Along with accessible controls, *World of Tanks* has multiple variables that make every battle a unique experience. Each tank has its vulnerabilities, strengths and weaknesses, and their individual performance on terrain. Understanding this becomes a major part of your ability to succeed, so mastering your tank and how it moves and fires in the field is crucial. Two more game design features that add replayability are crew member skills and upgradable tech modules. Players gradually unlock and buy better guns, engines, radios, and other add-ons that improve their ability to repair, allow them shoot faster, or help them stay unnoticed to the enemy.

The game is easy to jump into, yet not something you become great at overnight.

How do you keep players playing after their first session?

We offer players a smooth learning curve allowing them to uncover an ever-growing variety of machine along the way.

You can play *World of Tanks* using six nationalities—USA, USSR, German, French, British and Chinese vehicles. Each has multiple tank classes and up to ten levels of quality within each tree. Of course, you must earn those tanks, and that requires time on the battlefield.

Rookies start playing against other users with ten or less games under their belt. This means they won't be a target for experienced players. The requirement to work your way through the lower tier tanks is essential for understanding the importance of tanks' mechanics and the need for upgrades. As players learn and progress through the tiers, their tank crew gains abilities. They purchase better tech modules and consumables (like in RPGs). In this way, virtual tankmen are encouraged to play, to gain experience and credits, and to improve.

How important is historical accuracy when adding new tanks?

No computer game is 100% realistic, but we do our best to be as historically accurate as it is possible within the limits of our game engine.

Wargaming has a team of knowledgeable historians that dig into museum archives and study authentic blueprints. They provide *World of Tanks*' 3D modelling team with a detailed description for every vehicle and double check the model when it's done. Then new machines go through several rounds of balancing, so that at the end they perform similarly to their real life prototypes (ie they are historically realistic in terms of internal components and the relative parameters of different vehicles and different nations).



Producer Mike Zhivets believes accessibility is key.



Each tank undergoes comprehensive evaluation to handle realistically.

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Update 8.0 has given *World of Tanks* seriously sexed-up visuals...


... while the overhauled physics have positively impacted gameplay.

How do you keep the game competitive and balanced when there are so many tanks being added regularly?
The balance is adjusted regularly as well. Our team gathers battle statistics after every content addition, taking into account the win rate of each new vehicle. We also go through forum threads and look to see whether players find newly added vehicles fit, or deem them either under or overpowerful.

In all, it usually takes up to three months to collect enough relevant data to analyse how new machines are performing. Then we tweak their characteristics, either buffing or nerfing them to ensure fair battle conditions.

How do you avoid feelings of unfairness among players when creating microtransactions?
World of Tanks' business model treats payers and non-payers equally. You can earn credits through play or pay for a more rapid training. What can gold do? It gives you a quick advantage to accelerate your tank's experience and gain needed credits for potential upgrades.

We sell no ultimate weapon though, neither do we provide any combat advantage for real-life money. Gold shells do give more penetration, but shot placement and tactics are still much more important. The gold option gives the ability to buy higher tier tanks faster, but it's largely a waste of money if you don't know how to play them.

So, the system helps payers save time on the research, but it doesn't create huge imbalances in the overall game. In the end, it's our players' skills that matter.

The 8.0 update was huge; why did you decide to revamp the engine?
New technologies evolve every day, and the game needs to keep up with the latest tech to stay competitive.

Our team is constantly updating the client and server engine components. Some enhancements are just more noticeable than others – the physics and rendering engine overhaul certainly being one of them.

Many games have physics systems that are simply a fancy element that has minimal effect on gameplay. In *World of Tanks*, however, it's an important gameplay mechanism, crucial for navigating the map and in platoon combat. So, implementing realistic physics has been another step towards the maximum robust experience. It's added a new layer of strategy and fun to the game, providing a challenge to even the most skilled players.

> **"We wanted to cut out all the boring stuff and throw you straight into battle"**

How has Update 8.0 been received?
World of Tanks recorded more than 30 million registrations worldwide five days after the release – proof that we have done well with the new physics and rendering.

What are the biggest problems players still have with *World of Tanks*?
The number of artillery present in many matches – especially high tier battles – has been an enduring complaint, and we are taking steps to restore the balance. Right now the game features an artificial arty limit, but it is a temporary measure.

World of Tanks will soon get new mid-tier artillery, stretching in-game SPGs from eight to ten tiers. It will hopefully allow players to research and unlock new artillery faster, thus encouraging them to try new vehicles rather than simply sticking to a specific top-tier model.

Aside from new tanks, how will the game expand in the coming year?
We have a plenty of new features in store for *World of Tanks*, including new battle arenas, game modes, and gameplay elements. Our game designers are thinking of new ways to encourage and manage developer/community interaction and will continue working on UI and the overall usability of the game client. Also, we'll be putting a lot of effort into growing the e-sport component of the game.

***World of Tanks* seems to be doing well in China and Russia – where is the game's biggest following?**
Players from Russia and other CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) countries make up the bulk of the player base for *World of Tanks*. The game has set a new 'peak concurrent players' record in Russia lately, with over 754,000 players battling each other at one time.

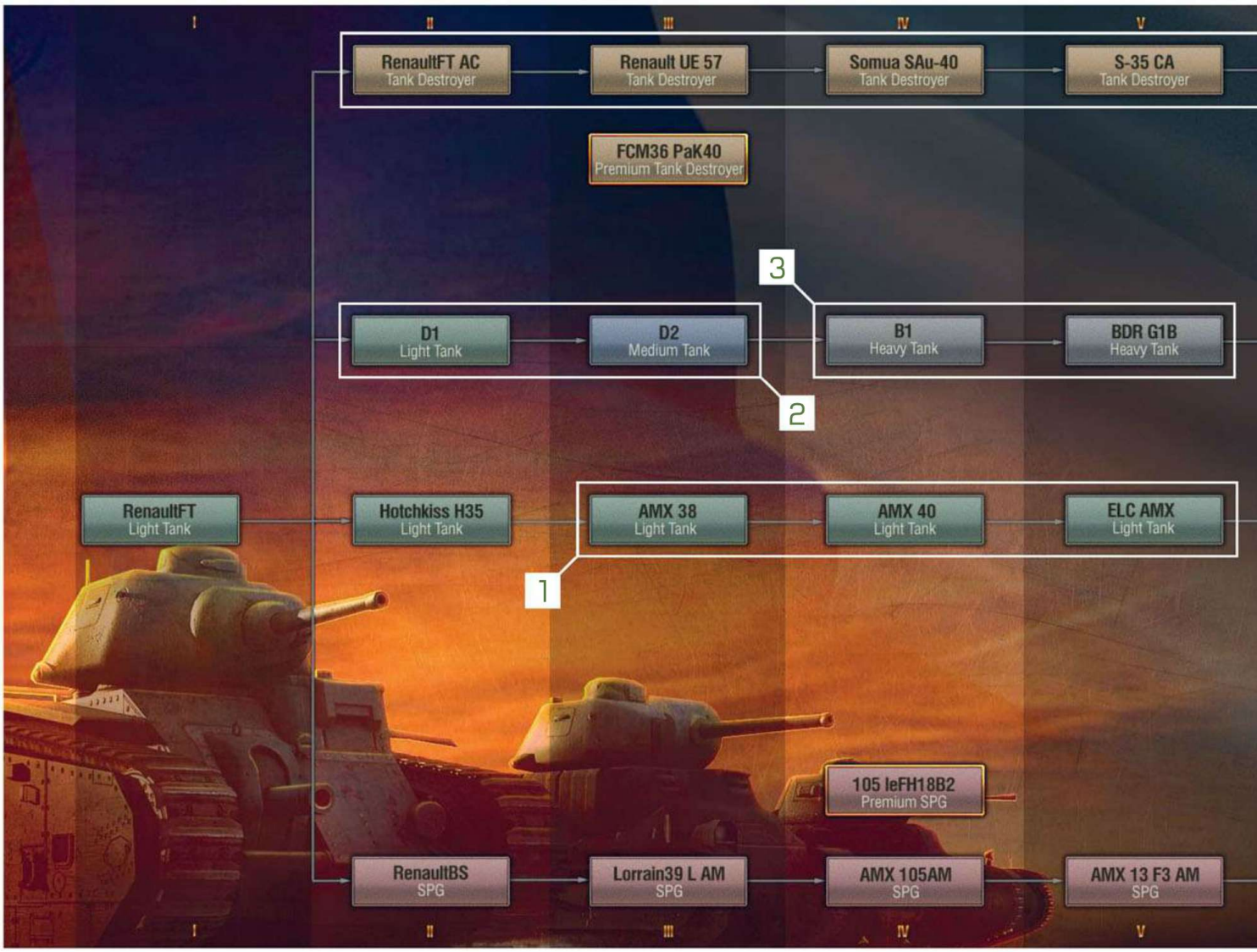
The second-largest region is China, where Wargaming's projects are operated by our partner, KongZhong Corporation.

What's your favourite tank? Are tanks better than planes and battleships?
The three warfare types are too different to compare. Plane dogfights, for example, are more dynamic than ground battles and require good positioning skills; naval combat is somewhat slow and calls for thought-out strategy. Tanks signal the middle ground between the two.

Speaking about favourites, I play the Tier 7 T-34-1 medium tank a lot. Its turret armour is superb, average DPM (damage per minute) and penetration are good, and the vehicle is manoeuvrable. The vulnerable hull is a problem but it can't all be good, and it's not that critical when you know how to play to its strengths. ■

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Tech tree analysis



1 ELC AMX

Low tier French light tanks are well-armoured machines. The tier III AMX 38 and tier IV AMX 40 are good examples; they might not be the quickest but can deflect all but the truest of shots. That philosophy changes when you reach the ELC AMX. It's a speedster, and armed with a lethal cannon, but is packaged up in perilously weak armour. Players who enjoyed the toughness of the lower tier French light tanks might do better to work toward unlocking a medium, over the ELC AMX.

2 D2

There's only one low tier French medium tank, and it's a bit of a misfit. The tier III D2 is bred from the tier II D1, a light tank that seems to think it's a medium. The D2 has similar ideas above its station, handling as slowly as a heavy tank. But that beefy size brings its own benefits: like the tier II D1, the D2 is well armoured for battles against its own tier, especially when you deign to stick it up against weaker enemy autocannons.



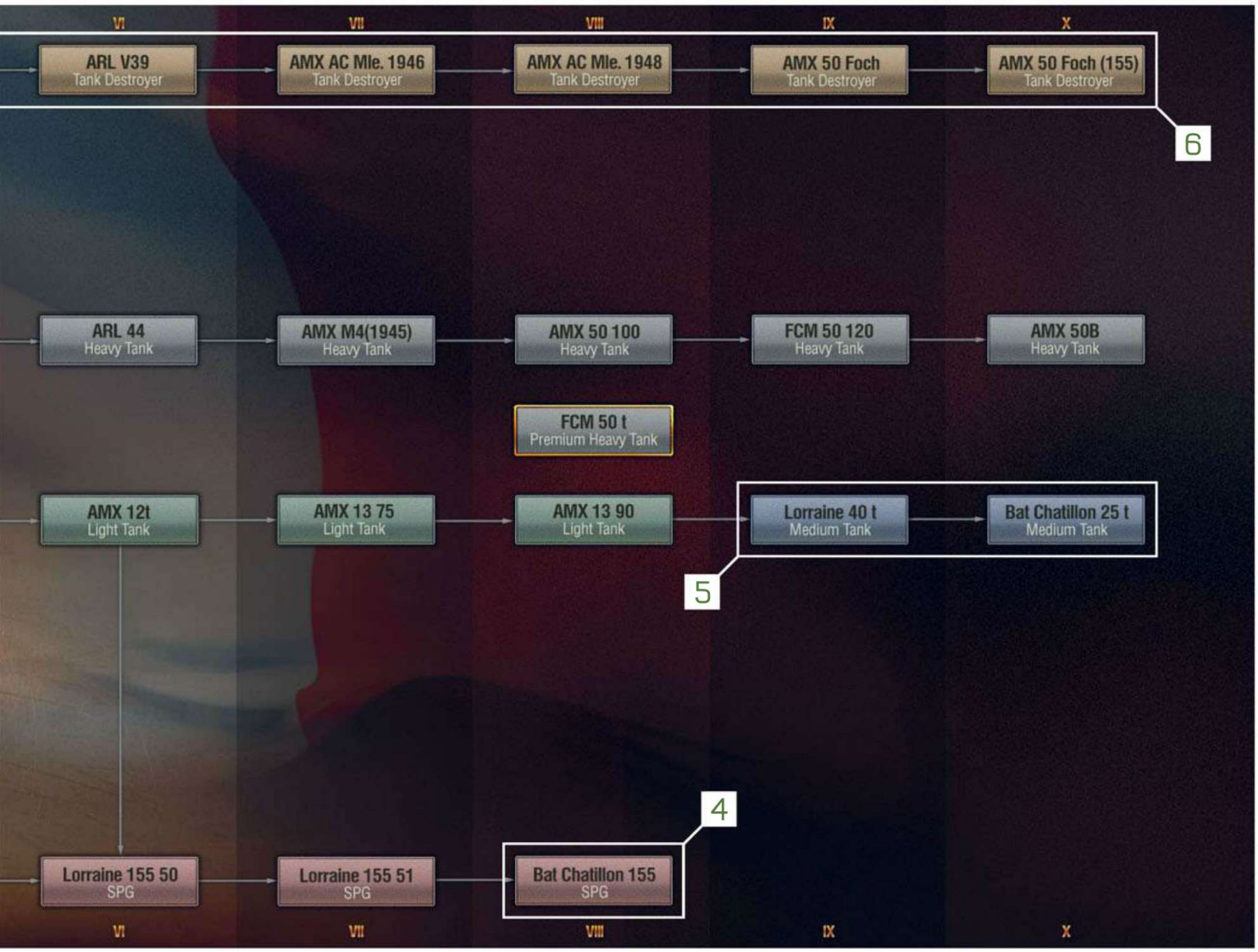
3 B1

The B1 can ostensibly be seen as the successor to the light D1 and medium D2. Those machines were sluggish for their class, and the B1 is no different, boasting a rather piddly top speed. But the B1 is special: it's the only heavy tank available at tier IV, meaning it can boss low level matches thanks to its decent armour and high hit points. Bear in mind the next heavy tank in the tree – the BDR G1B – basically flips this approach entirely, focusing on raw firepower over armour.

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FRANCE

Gallic tanks tend to be less well armoured than other countries' vehicles, but counteract that downside by packing a punch. A good number of them come equipped with autoloaders, too, meaning gunners can do a huge amount of damage in a short time.



4 BAT CHATILLON 155

French self-propelled guns are among the fastest in the game. This perk might not seem immediately useful for a vehicle type that tends to sit static and pick targets, but clever French artillery masters can use their knowledge of the game's maps to fire from cover and quickly reposition themselves before they're spotted. The tier VIII Bat Chatillon 155 is the poster-tank for this style, able to move into position, fire four shots from its autoloader, and escape counter-fire, all in about thirty seconds.

5 LORRAINE 40T



The French tech tree reintroduces medium tanks at tier IX, at which point they've traded the D2's armour for speed. The Lorraine 40t is incredibly fast for a machine so big, hitting 60km/h in seconds thanks to one of the game's best acceleration values. It's nimble, too – reassuring when people start shooting at you, as the Lorraine 40t's armour is pathetic. One step up the tree and you'll unlock the Bat Chatillon 25t, one of the game's best hunter-killer tanks.

6 RENAULT UE 57

French tank destroyers vary wildly in size. The top tier AMX 50 Foch (155) is comically huge, coming equipped with a stubby cannon that makes it look like a tanky dalek. Back down the tech tree, you'll find the Renault UE 57, christened 'the rat' by *WoT* players. But this proportional variation doesn't make much of a difference to French tank destroyer roles and capabilities. Most are fairly weakly armoured, but all have accurate weapons that'll penetrate all but the thickest enemy armour.

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Tank customisation



PIMP MY PANZERSCHRECK

When a brown tank just won't do, a pink one might. Boot up *World of Tanks* and get skinning.

Fact – *World of Tanks* is all about big fat guns, even better armour and upgrades galore. Sending your precious tank into battle ill-equipped isn't an option, unless you want to be blown into a bazillion pieces before you've even fired up your monster diesel V12 engines.

But when you've built your death-bringing slab of armour, dressed up to the nines in high tech equipment, tailor-made for your own personal brand of rolling thunder and you're ready to rock and roll, what's left to do? Well for most tankers, it's time to ditch the drab, bland and quite frankly boring skin that currently covers their tank, and re-skin with something slightly more suitable, more... personal.

Emblazoned across the following pages are a selection of serious, sexy and plain wacky skins – plus a guide that'll let you get your fave designs onto your favourite wodge of armour more quickly than you can say "Spongebob Squarepants".

So ditch the brown crowd and get colourful – let's talk re-skinning tanks.

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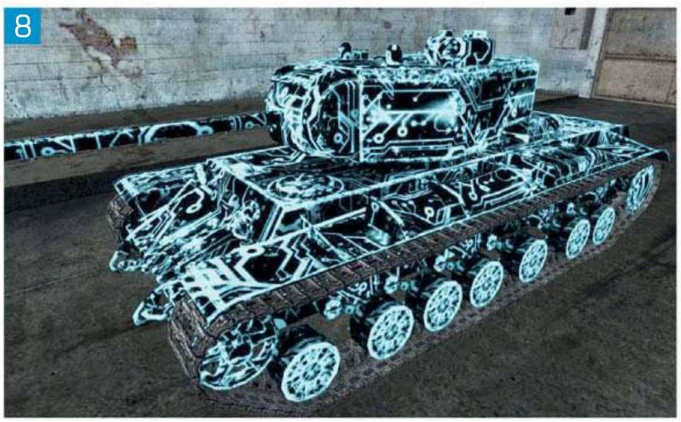
DETAILS 1 **M36 Slugger – Spongebob** by Loli 2 **Maus – Wicker** by Loli 3 **E100 - Iron Man** by RussianB****d 4 **AMX40 – Chicken** by Dejan Kober 5 **Lowe - Hello Kitty** by Kugelfiscl

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Tank customisation







DETAILS 6 **SU-152 – Bullet Bill** by Sargert67 7 **T-43 – Hexagon** by Kyphe 8 **KV-3 – Tron** by Anon

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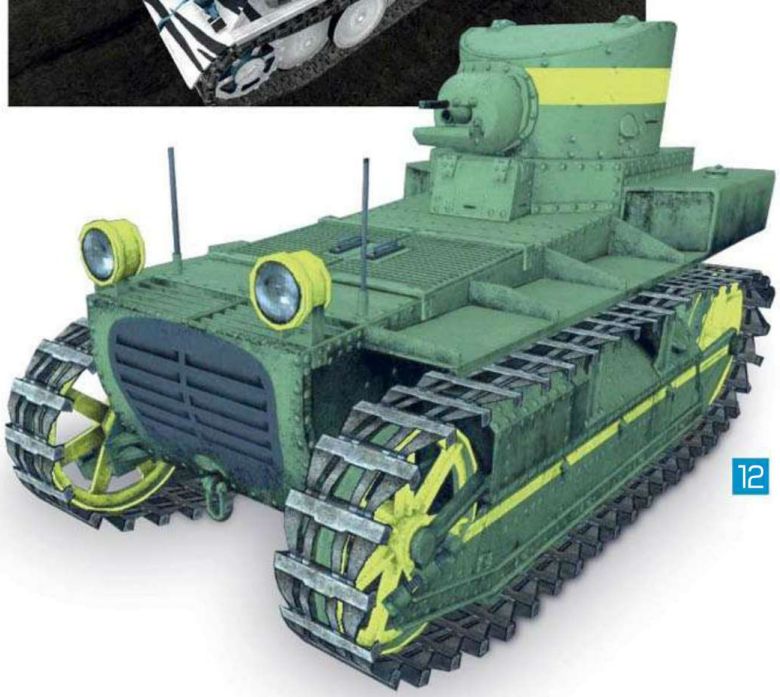
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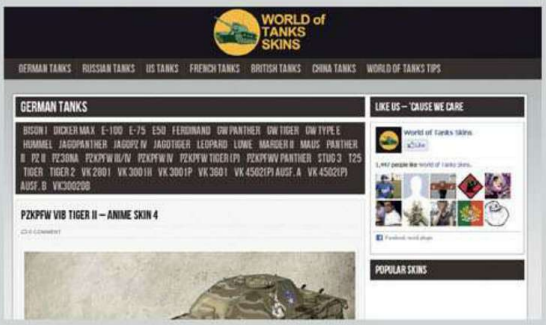
11



12

TUTORIAL Skinning made simple

Skinning isn't officially supported by *World of Tanks*, but it's simple enough – requiring a basic knowledge of file swapping, a small amount of C: drive digging and ten minutes or so. A dedicated programme for installing skins and mods also exists, so skip to Step 5 if you'd prefer that method.

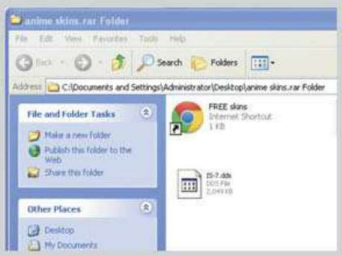


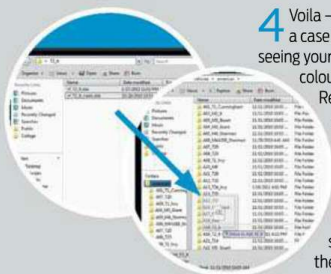
1 Firstly, you're going to need a skin. There are thousands of incredible skins available online, from digital camo to Hello Kitty decals. Find loads of fantastic fan-made options at *www.worldoftanksskins.com*. There are plenty of other brilliant sites; it's just a case of googling around.



2 When you've selected your favourite, hit the download button to get started. The file will likely be sealed in a .rar or zip. folder, so use an extraction app such as WinRar to unlock the bounty within. The file type you're looking for is '.dds' – that's the one you'll be copying into the *World of Tanks* C: directory.

3 Head to World of Tanks\res\vehicles directory. Select your nation and you'll see tanks listed by index number and name. This is where you'll find the original skin as a .dds file – overwrite it with your chosen skin. WARNING: Make a copy of the original .dds file if you're planning on switching back!





4 Voila – re-skin complete. Now it's just a case of loading up the game and seeing your hard work pay off, in all its colourful, tasteful or tactical glory. Remember, you'll be the sole benefactor after all your hard work, as only *your* game files contain the new skin file. If you want your comrades to see your bright orange beauty crest over the hill, be sure to send them a copy of the file also.



5 Lastly (as mentioned up above), there is a dedicated *World of Tanks* skin and mod installer available from: *bit.ly/skin_installer*. If you're not confident with the traditional method, just install this neat programme, drag your dds. files into the window and – shazam! – skin installed. Mission completed.

9 **Sherman – Leopard** by 51 10 **VK 3001** by Jory4001 11 **VK 2801 – Blue Zebra** by Danger_Weasel 12 **Cunningham – Retro** by Anon

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E-sports

WORLD OF TANKS COMES TO E-SPORTS

Wargaming put up $2.5 million prize pool for the 2013 season.



This year will see the planet's best *World of Tanks* players competing for a prize pool of $2.5 million. *WoT* has roared into the booming e-sports scene, and a massive investment by Wargaming means it looks set to become a long term pro-gaming fixture.

In keeping with the game's global reach, tournaments will take place in different server regions. The first of these have already begun, with the best Russian players from each region heading into a three-tiered set of major league, minor league, and open bracket compos. (Note: arrangements vary in other territories).

The best players from each earn the chance to get promoted; the beaten will drop down a level at the end of each league cycle. These tournaments and leagues will pay the best teams in *WoT* gold – the champion of the major league racking up 200,000 for winning – as well as the earning their place in a global grand final. That final's prize is yet to be revealed, but with $2.5 million in the kitty, it'll be big.

E-sports is an ever-burgeoning, multi-million dollar industry, Wargaming's Jonghyuk Baak, Global eSports Director, justifies the step. "The scale and popularity of competitive gaming has been skyrocketing over the last couple of years, and we have reached the point where we can focus significant effort on advancing *World of Tanks* on the global e-sports scene. Wargaming League is a groundbreaking step in our quest to bring the game's e-sports potential into the international spotlight."

Wargaming have past form bringing *World of Tanks* to the professional stage: the game appeared as a competitive title at the World Cyber Games 2012 Grand Finals in Kunshan, China. Fifteen teams from countries around the world battled against each other in the mud and dust of *World of Tanks*' battlegrounds over a weekend in December. Russian team RED Rush won out in a brutal final, rolling over Chinese team WaveKnight.

The event acted as a strong proof of concept for Wargaming, according to Andrei Yarantsau, VP of Global Operations: "Now we have a sustainable tool to broaden our global e-sports involvement in an unprecedented way: stimulate the growth of the competitive community, organise bigger and better tournaments with larger prize pools than ever, and provide our best pro gamers with completely viable career opportunities."

It's those career opportunities that are key to *WoT*'s e-sports staying power. Developers such as Riot Games have proven that games thrive as e-sports when their creators pump money into the economy. That cash injection allows the strongest players to dedicate their time to becoming the best they can be – in turn driving both their game of choice and the community of players on to greater heights. Wargaming's $2.5 million prize pool is an ideal jumpstart for that process, and gives *World of Tanks* a great chance of cementing itself as a global e-sport. ■

DEV TALK

Kirill Mal
Producer (Clan Wars)

What makes *World of Tanks* a good e-sport?
World of Tanks is pretty e-sports friendly and features impressive potential to make its own significant contribution to the field of global competitive gaming. The title has all the elements that make it addictive to the PvP enthusiasts, as well as appropriate maps that force creative play: dynamic PvP gameplay, enhanced physics and graphics, continuously updated in-game content and features.

All of these provide perfect battlegrounds for intense competitions among the world's best players.

Does *World of Tanks* make a good sport for spectators?
This is another crucially important element for competitive gaming. There is clearly a huge appetite for e-sports events among viewers, and the games industry is still trying to figure out the best way to deliver content. We've got a Spectator mode in *World of Tanks* that's already live; however, it is currently only available for use during competitions, and we're planning for smaller maps to accommodate smaller teams.

We're also paying significant attention to the modification of *World of Tanks*' interface to make it a perfect fit for e-sports tournaments and competitions – as well as developing 24/7 competitive format that will allow players to practice their gaming skills.

Any advice for gamers thinking about getting into e-sports?
Although some notable pro gamers are paid handsomely, don't expect to get rich off of e-sports any time soon. For a beginner, expenses like travel, hotels and registration fees can be pretty costly.

To be involved in e-sports requires passion. Just do it, but prepare to face many challenges. Jump in and find what you are capable of.

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A worldwide phenomenon, *WoT* players hail from across the globe.



Teams Odem Mortis and Evil Panda Squad – best of fiends.



STRANGE SCIENCE

How the *World of Tanks*' prize pool stacks up

League of Legends Season 2
Riot Games
$5,000,000

World of Tanks 2013 Season
Wargaming.net
$2,500,000

Dota 2 International 2012
Valve
$1,600,000

Intel Extreme Masters 2011-2012 Season
Intel Extreme Masters
$643,000

Dreamhack Winter 2012
Dreamhack
$294,000

Blizzard _StarCraft II_ World Championship Series 2012
Blizzard
$250,000

GomTV Global _StarCraft II_ League 2013 Season 1
GomTV
$153,970

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Interview

DEV TALK



Kirill Mall
World of Tanks Producer (Clan Wars)

What's

the advantage of playing in a clan?
Clan Wars isn't just a way for people to buddy up and play the same game they've already been playing – albeit in greater numbers. Instead, Clan Wars provides every player with an opportunity to become an ultimate conqueror of the world, and show their leadership qualities by creating a clan and uniting with other players to compete on the Global Map.

Clan Wars involvement requires players to demonstrate their skills and talents as hardcore strategists and sharp-witted diplomats. Players are able to negotiate non-aggression pacts and sign treaties that include financial, transport and military agreements, which may well benefit them and their allies. Essentially, Clan Wars invites players to focus more on strategy and forward-looking solutions.

What percentage of overall players fight in clans?
Currently six to ten per cent of all *World of Tanks* players are involved in Clan Wars. That might possibly be because Clan Wars ostensibly requires a deeper level of commitment than a core group of the game's fanbase are used to providing. We're aiming to change that.

How are you looking to improve the Clan Wars experience over the coming year?
Clan Wars mode is in beta testing and its functionality is constantly improving. With the latest update, the game acquired some new developments and changes that included features like Pillage and Riots.

Immediately after conquering a province, a clan may pillage it to instantly get a three-day gold income. The pillaged province will not bring any profit for the next week, even if the ownership passes to a different clan during this period.

A riot may occur in any non-landing province on the global map. It temporarily turns the rioting province into a landing zone, which may not be attacked from the neighbouring provinces, but *can* be landed upon by any clan on the global map. The province is then considered to be rioting until the end of the nearest prime time. The probability of a riot occurring on a province is not a constant number – but is instead illustrated by a percentage, which may grow or shrink with each turn owing to a number of various factors. For example, a province may be engulfed by riot if it or any neighbouring territory is pillaged, or if headquarters is removed from this area, and so on.

The players will also be given an opportunity to conduct various sabotage activities within hostile provinces. The feature will introduce a new unit – Sabotage Team – that can infiltrate enemy occupied territories and cause various



Mall's plans for Clan Wars are ambitious, to say the least.

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Clans offer veteran tankers the chance to combine in-game skill with wider strategy.



Clan Wars – taking over the world, one territory at a time.

minor or major disturbances to the opponents, like taking out an enemy's chips, opening borders, inciting a riot and destroying headquarters.

We also have plans to rebuild Clan Wars' current system from scratch and introduce a completely new system based on seasons. The season is an event that will cover the whole Global Map. Before the season starts, the map will be completely wiped out and all the participating clans – unfortunately – will lose their territorial possessions. Then a new redivision of the world will begin. One season will last for approximately two months and will be divided into stages. Each stage will feature its combat objectives and vehicles.

Depending on how the various clans successfully reach these objectives, they will be granted victory points. At the end of each season the victory points of each clan will be summed up and a winner will be announced. After that, the Global Map will be wiped once more and all clans will embark on a short vacation until the beginning of another season.

Additionally we plan to completely overhaul the Global Map's graphics engine and tools to enhance its interface, making the gameplay visually more stunning, user-friendly and fun to play.

Is it your intention that all players fight in clans eventually?

Yes, and we are working hard to increase the number of players on the Global Map. We also have some secret plans for the future to enlarge Clan Wars.

Why is it important that *World of Tanks* works as an e-sport?

During the last decade e-sports has become a really important medium, with millions of dollars handed out to the top winners and huge amounts of fans watching tournaments online. We didn't believe there were any MMO titles out there able to offer the competitive experience gamers were looking for. It was a great opportunity for us to carve out a very large place in a booming e-sports environment. We really want *World of Tanks* to become *the* global e-sports discipline and are working hard to expand the title's competitive potential to include new e-sports modes, as well as various co-operative challengers.

Last year Wargaming demonstrated serious aspirations for its current and upcoming MMO titles in the competitive gaming market. The game's victorious debut as an e-sports discipline at the WCG 2012 Grand Finals in Kunshan, China, marked the beginning of *World of Tanks*' global e-sports career and highlighted the title's potential to become the MMO standard for competitive gaming around the globe.


Wargaming hope to eventually dominate the world of e-sports.

"Clan Wars requires players to show their skills and talents as hardcore strategists"

With the establishment of the Wargaming League, e-sports became a significant piece of our business. Now we are very excited about the new marketing opportunities and challenges it opens for us. Competitive gaming helps to reveal the real potential of the game. At the same time, it's a pretty tricky thing; it is not like you just make a game and call it an e-sports discipline. Competitive gaming today attracts thousands of players who see it as a way to make a living. With each passing day, more and more people are recognising the value in e-sports participation.

You have to deal with an incredibly detail-oriented community of players who possess a certain level of expectation when it comes to their competitive platform and experience. This means a huge responsibility and commitment on our part – and to meet their expectations takes development time, effort and service support.

Therefore we are constantly both looking at and evaluating in-game balance and structure, making on-the-fly adjustments that are necessary to keep building on the e-sports elements and expanding *World of Tanks*' potential as a professional e-sport on a global scale.

Why would you recommend *World of Tanks* over, for example, *StarCraft* or *League of Legends*?

Tanks were never part of e-sports before. From now on the historical accuracy, extreme fun and realistic tank battles with burning metal, dirt and dust are part of the global competitive gaming ecosystem. That is worth experiencing. ■

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Clan interviews

Wargaming's *World of Tanks* boasts one of the most passionate fanbases of any videogame.

The true hardcore flock to join clans, competing for fortune and glory alongside the tanker elite.

We talk to two of them and find out what makes them tick.



If you're looking to join a top clan, dedication is a must.

ODEM MORTIS-V & -X
glenmp
Clan Commander

EYE FOR AN EYE
Zella
Clan Commander

Datamursu
Deputy Commander

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What is your proudest achievement as clans to date?

OM With Odem Mortis we've fostered one of Europe's most well-known *World of Tanks* communities, taking part with huge success in both Clan Wars and Tournaments (Wargaming and ESL) with several e-sports teams. We're proud of our rapid progress and hope it will continue.

On the first birthday of Odem Mortis-V we organised a clan meeting in Düsseldorf and Cologne during Gamescom 2012 – almost 50 members of the Odem Mortis Community met up there and celebrated for three days!

EFE Being here where we are now. This clan was built from scratch and from the start our goal was to make a name for ourselves as elite players and live up to that reputation, within Clan Wars, Tank Company battles or random battles.

Our standards were high from the start – as our clan page says: "If you're good, looking for a team and you're a d**k, join this one." So here we are as we were meant to be. Also, we are proud that we have never been or will never be part of an alliance and that we will still remain on the Clan Wars map.

Why decide to play *World of Tanks* as an e-sport?

OM *World of Tanks* is a strategic game. You have to coordinate either seven or 15 players in a battle, while also briefing them and discussing tactics before a match. It's not just the skill of a single player like in something like *Counter-Strike*; in my opinion *World of Tanks* is more dependent on teamwork and how well teams learn to play together.

Of course, *World of Tanks* is also quite young in terms of the e-sports scene, meaning our clan was able to participate from the very beginning.

EFE Compared to rival e-sport titles, *World of Tanks* boasts more depth in terms of tactics and team play. Also, the game doesn't require lighting reflexes.

How does *World of Tanks* compare to other titles in e-sports?

OM *Starcraft* or *League of Legends* are the big players in the e-sports scene, but Wargaming has certainly done well to push into the business.

EFE *World of Tanks* has one really strong plus on its side, and it's that you don't need rapid reflexes to succeed – rather, being able to demonstrate your strategic nous is the focal point here.

What's the status of the *World of Tanks* competitive scene at the moment?

OM One of the issues in the e-sports section is the spectator mode – games are often not that interesting when tanks camp for five minutes in just one position.

That said, the last few updates have made the game faster (with additions like autoloaders and high tier light tanks) plus changed its structure from the ground up (e.g. physics patches, tweaked maps), meaning professional teams have to be up to date and constantly evolve their tactics and setups.

Do you prefer Clan Wars or Tournaments, and why?

EFE Currently we prefer Clan Wars, because we feel the format works better at this moment compared to Tournaments with their schedules changes etc. We just like to have fun – Tournaments are a serious business and sometimes just one or two losses will end your trip. ▸

> **"Our goal was always to make a name for ourselves as elite players"**





World of Tanks doesn't necessarily require lightning reflexes; instead, the skill lies in the planning and deployment of tactics.



WoT constantly evolves, meaning player tactics must too.

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Clan interviews

How do you recruit members? Do you test members before accepting them?

OM We have several recruiters in our clans, who are responsible for the entire recruitment system. Most of the new members either apply via our clan page or join our TeamSpeak to talk to one of the persons responsible.

After the interview follows a test (approx. 60 minutes long) monitored by two of our experienced team members – who check their knowledge of gameplay, mechanics, skills, communication etc. After passing, new recruits have to drive several platoon rounds and convince our testers they deserve a 'yes' vote.

EFE Via forums, in game… or whatever! The entry requirements are on our forum, so any budding members can visit and check them out. When a person applies to join, we often check their stats from the last 1000 battles, do some platooning etc.

After enrolling in the clan, a month-long 'recruitment' period follows where we'll decide if the newbie is able to shine in the Clan Wars environment – they'll then join permanently... or not.

How do you prepare for important games? Do you scout out enemy teams beforehand?

OM For every battle we have at least one War Leader, who prepares tactics for each map, in addition to deciding the setup of tanks. Scouting is always important; if you know and see more than your enemy, you can give the right orders to your tankers.

In our opinion it's a mixture of the experience of the War Leader allied to the individual decisions of the drivers or groups of tanks (the 'heavies', 'meds' and 'arty') that usually brings success in Clan Wars or Tournaments.

EFE The Clan Wars map is pretty static and you tend to play against same clans so you pretty much know what your established rivals are likely to do, while most of new opponents aren't that different from previous ones. Being aware of your opponents' reputation is often enough; you pretty much know what to expect. So, no, we don't personally scout enemy teams.

What's the toughest battle you've ever won, and how did you overcome the enemy? Were there any heroic individual moments?

OM For us the toughest win was a battle in the ESL Go4Wot Cup 50. It was the fight for third place against 1SBP and we triumphed on the maps Mines and Steppes. On Mines it was an innovative move to flank the heavy tanks of the enemy (at this time, there were no 13-90s).

As arty players, if you deal more than 700 damage with a Grille or 350 damage with a Bison on a tier VIII heavy, these are heroic moments – where two or four tier points can significantly raise your chances of winning. But pulling off a one-shot with a bigger arty on a French tank makes me smile every time.

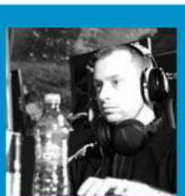
EFE I can't really name one single game, but in terms of battles I would opt for our campaign against Yellow Alliance in autumn 2012. We dominated them!

What are some of the challenges of running such a large international community of players?

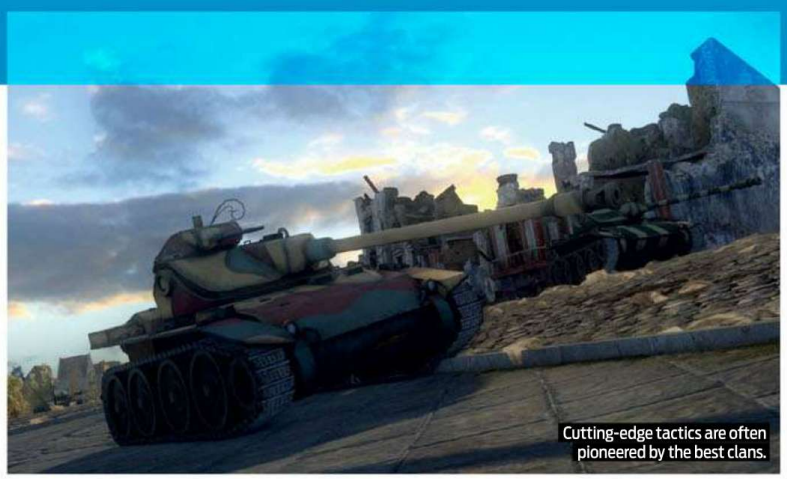
EFE There sure can be lot of different kinds of people! Many nations play *World of Tanks*, but only one language and lots of ways to use it. Communications can cause problems sometimes, for sure – nearly one hundred players and only a handful of commanders looking after them all.

Congratulations to Odem Mortis-V TT for picking up a win at morewot.de Cup 1. What was the team's favourite moment of the competition?





Appreciating the idiosyncrasies of maps is key to success in battle.



Cutting-edge tactics are often pioneered by the best clans.



Breaking into Odem Mortis involves rigorous testing.

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OM OM-V TT's favourite moment was the final match against noobs ins!de. It was a 'Best of Three' and after OM-V TT lost the first map Ruinberg everybody thought noobs ins!de would triumph in the final. But OM-V TT clawed back, won Mines and sealed victory on Abbey. That was a curious battle, because their two AMX 13 90s basically got stuck…!

How do you pick and form teams from within the clan; are picks based purely on performance/win ratios?

OM Teams for Clan Wars are picked by the War Leader before the battle. They can choose whoever they want; for me as a clan commander it's most important to get the win. Every ESL or Tournament team has an own structure and organisation; commanders can even recruit players who are not in the clan for their ESL Team.

For instance, some weeks ago the ESL Team OM-V and the ESL Team ONS fused to create the new team OM-V – 'Orbis non Sufficit', and most of the ONS players joined the clan OM-V. Also, a new ESL-Team OM-Injection was founded a few weeks ago and after only one week of playing Tournaments they finished in second place at the morewot.de Cup 2 and scored some Roccat Headsets.

Do you have any advice for budding tankers thinking about making the leap into the big teams?

OM Try it for sure, but be prepared. We offer new players who want to join our community the opportunity to tag along as 'friends' and give them time to drive with the 'rude Odem Mortis guys' in platoons or even in companies before attempting to pass the test and join our clan. So they can learn from experienced players and can make sure that they definitely want to be part of Odem Mortis.

EFE Listen to the orders of the Field Commander and do as you are told. If you have a potential battle strategy in mind, flag it up before executing. Don't think that you are already good enough if you perform well in public matches... Clan Wars is a totally different world.

Also, don't whine about losing if you are not dedicated enough to go about fixing it. There are certain types in the bigger clans who aren't there to be friends – so don't get upset if somebody gives you strict feedback. Learning from mistakes is an important element of improvement. A player who makes a mistake isn't stupid, but a player who repeats that mistake is!

How would you ideally like to see the clan system grow in the next year?

EFE You could set clans together in same group, like a family of sorts, while alliances could create alliance pages like clans now have their own clan pages. There you could discover who was part of which alliance, who they were against and who their personnel consisted of. Perhaps you could also add entire clans to your friend list so you could easily invite them to Tank Companies etc. Alliances are also arguably sometimes too powerful now. ■

> **"Pulling off a one-shot with an arty on a French tank makes me smile every time"**





Above all, team work – and team *spirit* – separates the champions from the also-rans. Make pals, work together and glory beckons.



Obey the orders of your commander, or you're out!

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Famous battle



Need to know

Who
Germans vs Allied Forces

When
16 December 1944 – 25 January 1945

Where
The Ardennes (Belgium), Luxembourg and Nazi Germany

THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE

The famed Battle of the Bulge, fought over the bleak winter months of 1944-1945, was the final major Axis offensive against the Allies in World War II – as Hitler desperately strove to derail the march towards Berlin by severing major supply lines. It was also one of the most spectacular clashes of armour during the conflict, as state-of-the-art tanks on both sides clashed mightily. The attack is referred to in military parlance as the Ardennes Offensive, but since the initial attack by the Germans created a 'bulge' in the Allied front line, the nickname has stuck.

The Battle of the Bulge commenced on 16 December, 1944, and was centred upon the Ardennes sector – an 80 mile front considered militarily unimportant and held by only six American divisions. Three German armies would drive the offensive, each with a clear mandate. The 6th Panzer Army, led by General Josef 'Sepp' Dietrich, would spearhead the attack by capturing the key port of Antwerp. The 5th Army, led by Hasso von Manteuffel, was to drive at the heart of the American forces, capturing St. Vith before turning towards Brussels. Finally, the 7th Army, led by General Erich Brandenberger, would attempt to prevent US reinforcements from striking at the 5th. Meanwhile, the German 15th Army would wait in reserve in case of any potential Allied counter-attack.

Between them, Dietrich and Manteuffel fielded 28 divisions, ten of them armoured and containing 1,250 of the 2,600 tanks and assault guns amassed for the offensive, codenamed 'Autumn Mist.' Overseen by an increasingly desperate and controlling Hitler, strategically, it was a daring – some might say crazy – initiative. At this point in the conflict, Germany seemed beaten; certainly incapable of mounting such a fierce attack. The Allies, now tantalisingly close to the borders of the Third Reich, were relaxed, arguably overconfident and certainly not expecting such an aggressive, full-scale assault.

Eifel Power

With German espionage resulting in the spreading of disinformation and the severing of telephone lines, plus blizzard-esque weather conditions preventing the Allies from unleashing the RAF Typhoons and USAAF Mustangs, the scene was set. When the offensive – a mighty armoured attack at Schnee Eifel – commenced on 16 December, 1944 the Nazis made impressive early inroads, culminating in the creation of the famed 'bulge' in Allied lines. Such was the lack of available Allied manpower in these initial days, anybody who could wield a rifle was despatched to the front lines – from cooks to members of marching bands.

It took almost a week for Eisenhower's shaken US forces to respond with any kind

THE BATTLE'S KEY TANK — THE M4A3E2 SHERMAN JUMBO HUNTED GERMAN PANTHERS

Featuring much heavier armour than their predecessor, the M4A3E2 was initially intended as an infantry support tank. However, some were re-equipped with the M1A1 76mm gun on the orders of General George S. Patton and served as tank hunters tracking German Panthers during the Battle of the Bulge. Though the Panther was the superior tank, it was eventually overwhelmed by sheer Allied numbers.





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A British Sherman Firefly waits by the Meuse River in December 1944.

of success, when the US 7th Armoured Division and 101st Airborne Division prevented Manteuffel's 5th Panzer army from capturing the vital road hub of Bastogne. Meanwhile, Field Marshal Montgomery and General Patton were ordered to strike at the northern and southern flank of the 'bulge' driven into the Allied line respectively.

Fuelling the Fire

On 23 December, St. Vith was taken by Manteuffel as the Wehrmacht and their Tiger IIs made impressive progress, with Me-262 jet bombers also terrifying the US ranks. Yet a mere two days afterwards the German machine ground to a halt three miles short of their final destination – the river Meuse. There was a key logistical issue with German plans; they simply didn't possess enough fuel to continue the assault, and the capture of significant US fuel supplies was considered paramount to longer-term success. Plundered provisions simply weren't enough, though, and many Axis troops were simply forced to abandon their vehicles. Meanwhile, the US 2nd Armoured Division and Allied fighter-bombers pummelled their petrol-less opponents mercilessly.

When the Allied counterattack finally transpired, it was devastating. On 26 December, the US 4th Armoured Division secured Bastogne, then St. Vith. By 16 January, 1945, the US 1st and 3rd Armies met at Houffalize in Luxembourg, closing the last German escape route. In total, Operation Autumn Mist had cost the Wehrmacht a staggering 100,000 men, and seen 800 tanks destroyed. Although US troop losses were similarly heinous (81,000 killed or wounded) on a wider strategic scale it merely delayed the Allied invasion of Germany a scant few more months.

Despite a furious and increasingly fantastical Hitler urging his generals to fight to the bitter end, it was clear that to do so would only prolong the slaughter. The game was up – the Germans simply didn't have the fuel supply lines to sustain their armour; effectively the further they advanced, the more impossible the situation became. Hitler's all-out gamble to crush the Allies and have them sue for peace lay in tatters. The last of the Wehrmacht reserves had been extinguished, the Luftwaffe had been shattered and the remaining German forces in the West were pushed back all the way to the Siegfried Line. Now, it was simply a matter of time before World War II was finally over in Europe. ■


'The Bulge' constituted Hitler's last, all-or-nothing gamble.


More than 800 German tanks were ruined during Operation Autumn Mist.

BATTLE QUOTES

"This is undoubtedly the greatest American battle of the war and will, I believe, be regarded as an ever-famous American victory."

WINSTON CHURCHILL
BRITISH PRIME MINISTER

"The Ardennes battle drives home the lesson that a large-scale offensive by massed armour has no hope of success against an enemy who enjoys supreme command of the air. Our precious reserves had been expended, and nothing was available to ward off the impending catastrophe in the east."

FRIEDRICH VON MELLENTHIN
GERMAN GENERAL

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Top 10

SELF-PROPELLED GUNS



10 M7 Priest

Overview

Best at
Rate of fire. The M7 Priest reloads quickly, meaning you can pepper targets with more shots than most SPGs can put out.

Worst at
Splash Damage. The Priest's shells don't have a huge explosion radius, meaning you'll need to hit your target to hurt it.

The iconic American M7 Priest is one of the most well-known artillery pieces of World War II. It's a solid choice in *World of Tanks* too, the self-propelled gun blessed with a good engine and a versatile gun. That gun isn't the most powerful, but it fires its shells in an arc, allowing them to loop up and over obstructions that would stop projectiles fired at a shallower angle. The Priest's gun reloads quickly, too: although it won't be knocking enemies out in one shot, you're able to lay down a salvo of explosive fire if you've got a set of scouts pinging opponents on the map for you.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 6 ◆ **Hit Points** 210 ◆ **Speed Limit** 39 km/h ◆ **Tier** IV ◆ **Cost** 175,000

Overview

Best at
Damage. One shot from the Hummel's cannon will put a serious dent in tanks of its tier, and even above.

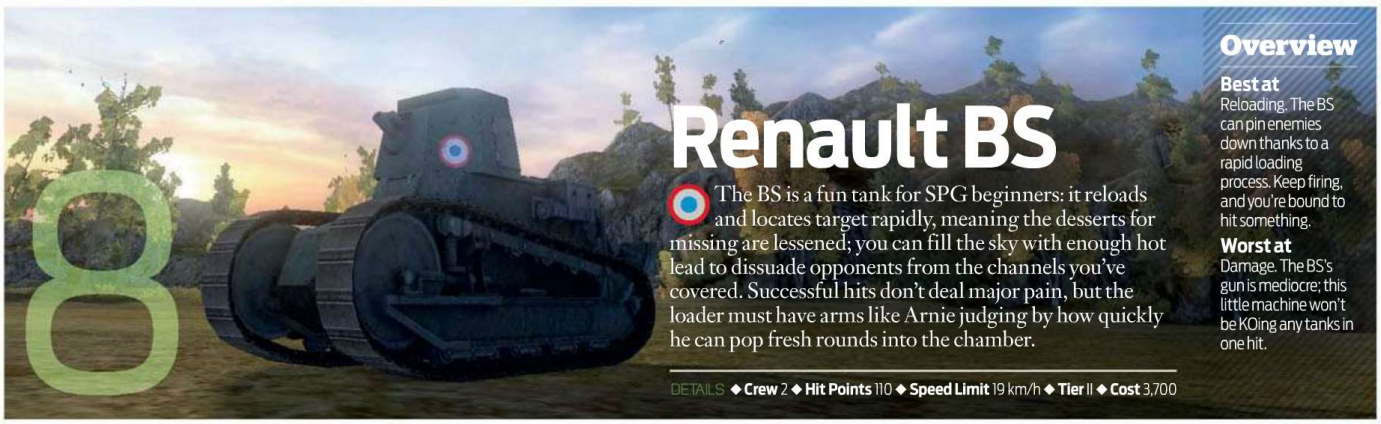
Worst at
Reloading. It takes 19 seconds for the Hummel to reload, and its shells are expensive. Try not to miss.

9+ Hummel

The German Hummel SPG is an excellent all-rounder. It's got good speed, an accurate cannon, and an arc that means it can hit targets all over the map. Best of all, though, is the amount of damage the machine can put out. A single shot from the Hummel's gun will knock out tanks of its tier, and blast holes in higher tier machines. Only pull the trigger when you're confident of a hit, though – the Hummel's shells cost a bucket of credits, and rearming after each round is painful on your finances.



DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 6 ◆ **Hit Points** 320 ◆ **Speed Limit** 40 km/h ◆ **Tier** V ◆ **Cost** 692,700



8 Renault BS

Overview

Best at
Reloading. The BS can pin enemies down thanks to a rapid loading process. Keep firing, and you're bound to hit something.

Worst at
Damage. The BS's gun is mediocre; this little machine won't be KOing any tanks in one hit.

The BS is a fun tank for SPG beginners: it reloads and locates target rapidly, meaning the desserts for missing are lessened; you can fill the sky with enough hot lead to dissuade opponents from the channels you've covered. Successful hits don't deal major pain, but the loader must have arms like Arnie judging by how quickly he can pop fresh rounds into the chamber.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 2 ◆ **Hit Points** 110 ◆ **Speed Limit** 19 km/h ◆ **Tier** II ◆ **Cost** 3,700

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7 S-51

Overview

Best at
Damage. The S-51's 203mm howitzer is monstrously powerful against tanks of its tier, and can finish off an enemy in one hit.

Worst at
Accuracy. It's powerful, but the S-51's gun isn't the most accurate on the field. Luckily, it has a good blast radius.

Christened 'the unicorn' by players thanks to its giant gun, the S-51 looks more like an artillery piece than its self-propelled brethren. It doesn't just look the part: the S-51's upgradeable cannon is fearsome. The 203mm B-4 gun dishes out a vast amount of damage, and explodes in a cloud of superheated gas and shrapnel powerful enough to hurt anything trundling nearby. The downside: the gun is inaccurate, and takes a good while to reload, so try not to miss. If you do, the S-51's meagre ammunition stores mean you might be dry long before the end of

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 6 ◆ **Hit Points** 310 ◆ **Speed Limit** 32 km/h ◆ **Tier** VI ◆ **Cost** 1,200,000



6 T57

Overview

Best at
Armour. The T57 has comparatively great armour on its front, making it almost as tough as a regular tank.

Worst at
Splash damage. Like most low tier self-propelled guns, the T57's shell blast radius is very small. Aim for direct hits only.

It's a low tier SPG, but the T57 can often feel more like a tank. It's armoured like a tank, for one, able to shrug off the kind of hits that would make other SPGs and tank destroyer drivers wince. It's also got a powerful little engine that allows it to chug along to the mid-point of the map and rain down its shells from there. Some drivers like to play the T57 like a pseudo-destroyer, using its low angled gun to fire in straight lines at enemies in the middle distance, but those who use its sniper view will find an accurate, quick-loading machine that's a boon to any team.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 5 ◆ **Hit Points** 115 ◆ **Speed Limit** 40 km/h ◆ **Tier** II ◆ **Cost** 3,100



5 Bat Chatillon 155

Overview

Best at
Rate of fire. The 155 can drop four high-accuracy, acceptable-damage shells on a position in a few seconds.

Worst at
Reload time. Once your autoloader's depleted, the Bat Chatillon 155 is functionally useless for at least a minute.

The scariest thing about this French tier VIII SPG is its mighty autoloader. It stores four shells in its chamber, meaning players who've zeroed in on a target have a great chance of doing some heavy damage without having to wait for a lengthy reload. The shells it does fire don't have the raw power of some of the other tier VIII SPGs, but the Bat Chatillon 155 makes up for this deficiency by being highly accurate, able to put its four concurrent shots in a fairly small space. Stay out of the enemy's view once you're done with your four shots, however, as the Bat Chatillon 155's reload process is agonising: it takes over a minute before you can fire again – something to bear in mind when picking this slice of armour.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 5 ◆ **Hit Points** 620 ◆ **Speed Limit** 62 km/h ◆ **Tier** VIII ◆ **Cost** 3,460,000

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Top 10



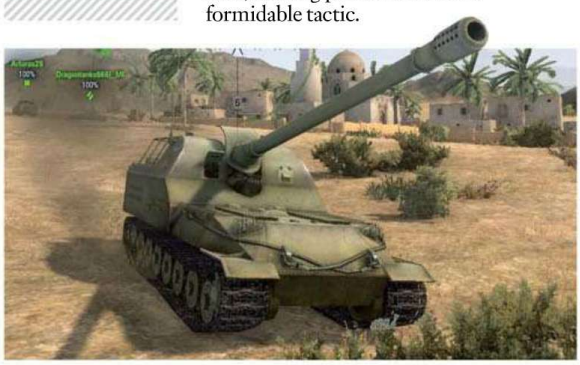
4 Object 261

Overview

Best at
Accuracy. Object 261 is the most accurate self-propelled gun in its tier, and finds its target fairly quickly.

Worst at
Damage. Compared to other top-end self-propelled guns, Object 261 doesn't hit with a lot of force.

★ Object 261 initially resembles a tank destroyer, with its long cannon situated way back on its hull. It fires like one, too, shells looping off in a shallow arc that makes city-fighting a nightmare as medium-sized buildings block off your firing angles. But the benefit of the variation is to be found in shell travel time: other SPGs have to lead their shots to account for the time it takes the projectile to connect with its target. In contrast, Object 261 blasts with such velocity that it hits a few miliseconds later, making precision strikes a formidable tactic.



DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 5 ◆ **Hit Points** 560 ◆ **Speed Limit** 50 km/h ◆ **Tier** VIII ◆ **Cost** 3,430,000

3 GW Tiger

Overview

Best at
Damage. The GW Tiger can do up to 2,000 damage with its second cannon. Research it and terrify your enemies.

Worst at
Reloading. It takes an age for the GW Tiger to reload its cannon, meaning a lot of downtime for drivers.

+ The GW Tiger is gigantic and hideous, like an poorly designed elongated shoebox with a humongous gun attached. Ignore the ugly stylings, though: that gun is the GW Tiger's best bit, able to – once upgraded to a decent spec – put the hurt on an enemy tank to the tune of a whopping 2,000 damage, more than enough to pop a good proportion of enemy tanks open in a single hit. It takes ages to reload, though, so sit further back and choose your targets carefully, lest you miss and are left to cower on the field, your massive profile an easy hit for the opposition team. The GW Tiger should always sit at the rear of a battle: it's far too big to hide in cover effectively, so your best bet to avoid enemy eyes is to loiter as far back as possible.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 6 ◆ **Hit Points** 570 ◆ **Speed Limit** 35 km/h ◆ **Tier** VII ◆ **Cost** 2,910,000

AMX 13 F3 AM



2

Overview

Best at
Speed. The F3 AM moves fast, allowing you to set up, fire a shot, and move on before you're spotted and taken down.

Worst at
Armour. A low-slung little machine, the F3 AM doesn't come with much protection. Watch out for enemy SPGs firing back.

This intriguing vehicle was mass-produced until the end of the 1960s and is still in service in France, Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Morocco and many other countries. Thanks to its rather unique design, the AMX 13 F3 AM has an asymmetrical firing arc. If your target's to the left, you'll have to re-align your whole hull to hit it, but if it's to the right, the gun's inbuilt travel means you won't have to move your tracks and break camouflage. Seriously advanced players will be able to use quirk to their advantage; others are better relying on the F3 AM's high top speed to get into good firing positions, squeeze a shot off, and move on before they're focused on by enemy SPGs. A firm favourite on the Mountain Pass map.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 5 ◆ **Hit Points** 300 ◆ **Speed Limit** 60 km/h ◆ **Tier** V ◆ **Cost** 650,000

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As you'd expect, that huge cannon brings unparallelled pain.

T92

Overview

Best at
Damage. The T92's gun has the best damage output of all vehicles in the entire game, and can kill tier X tanks in one shot.

Worst at
Accuracy. It's also the least accurate SPG gun in the game. Fortunately, vast splash damage makes up for this inadequacy.

The T92's massive cannon is almost comically big, looking more like the kind of thing you'd use to hold a skyscraper up than a gun. That silly aesthetic belies the T92's power: its gun is the beefiest in the entire game, easily able to knock all but the beefiest of enemy tanks out of the fight in one accurate hit.

Actually scoring that accurate hit is tougher: in addition to being the most powerful in *World of Tanks*, the T92's gun is the most inaccurate, taking a long time to zero in on its target, and – even then – leaving gunners with a wide crosshair. Fortunately, even if you don't hit your target dead-on the SPG's huge thirty metre splash damage means you'll have a good chance of doing *some* damage.

Aim for clumps of enemies moving together, and chances are you'll knock a few tracks out of commission. While the lengthy reload times mean you won't be following up with a killshot, your team-mates will appreciate the sitting ducks you've provided for them. Speaking of sitting ducks – the T92 itself is weak in close quarters, its gun aimed too high to angle down and fire off a 'no-scope' shot. Use the machine's acceptable manoeuvrability to escape trouble when you spot it rumbling towards you: a T92 is useless in a close range fight.


Remember to keep your distance; the T92 is awful up close.

DETAILS ◆ **Crew** 6 ◆ **Hit Points** 500 ◆ **Speed Limit** 40 km/h ◆ **Tier** VIII ◆ **Cost** 3,545,000

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Modding

MOD NATION



Fight the way you want to: our guide to modding *World of Tanks*.

You may not have stumbled across it yet, but *World of Tanks* has a growing mod scene, with dedicated players constantly dreaming up fresh tweaks and tools for their beloved game. These mods range from simple changes – some little more than cosmetic alterations – to entirely new tools that add to your experience... and even detailed statistical breakdowns that let you dive deeply into the numbers behind each battle.

What's more, the developers are actively encouraging modders, making it easy for them to alter individual parts of the game or access the vast bodies of information that catalogue our wins and losses. Just as long as they don't provide an unfair advantage: in which case beware bans.

So whether you're after an all-out total conversion, something that completely reskins your game, alters all the sound effects and gives you a garage you'll barely recognise, or you want to supplement your play with a useful tactical add-on, the *World of Tanks* community has probably rustled up something tasty for you.

But of all the mods out there, which ones are the best, how can you find them and just how do you install them? Fear not, for the answers to all those questions can be found on the following five pages...

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> "Wargaming encourages modders, making it easy to alter the game"

FINDING AND INSTALLING YOUR MODS Getting into the scene is a cinch

Installing mods isn't as complicated as you might think. The two main repositories for *World of Tanks* mods are the official *World of Tanks* forum and the rather scary sounding CurseForge (*www.curse.com/wot-mods/worldoftanks*).

Once you've found a mod you like the sound of, make sure it's compatible with the latest version of *World of Tanks* – otherwise it may not work when you install it. Download the archive the mod comes in, most probably a .zip file with a couple of directories. You'll be copying these directories, and all the files in them, over to the corresponding directories in your *World of Tanks* directory (World_of_Tanks\res_mods directory).

In most cases these will be in a subdirectory called 0.8.4 – just like the 0.8.4 subdirectory in your \res_mods directory – and you'll simply be overwriting that one. In a few cases, some mods may also create an extra directory and drop in a few more files.

If you'd rather the process was automated, you can always grab the extremely handy *World of Tanks* Skin and Mod installer from WoT Skins (*www.worldoftanksskins.com*). Do, however, be warned that it will try to also install a search toolbar on installation – if you don't want it, go to the Advanced Installation screen and uncheck the relevant options.

When the mod installer runs, all you need to do is drag the directories from your mod .zip file directly into the program window, and the program will copy them to the right directories within *World of Tanks*. Voila! You've just completed the trickiest part of the entire process.

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Modding

TAKE AIM

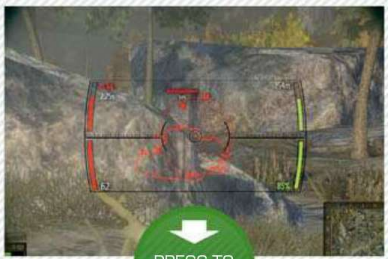
The top three gunsight mods

If there's one thing you're going to spend plenty of your time doing in a tank, it's shooting. While it's true that you have a multitude of ways to customise both your gunsight and HUD via the in-game options, there are mods aplenty offering alternative sights, crosshairs and stat readouts. Here are three of the best.

1 J1MBO'S CROSSHAIR MOD

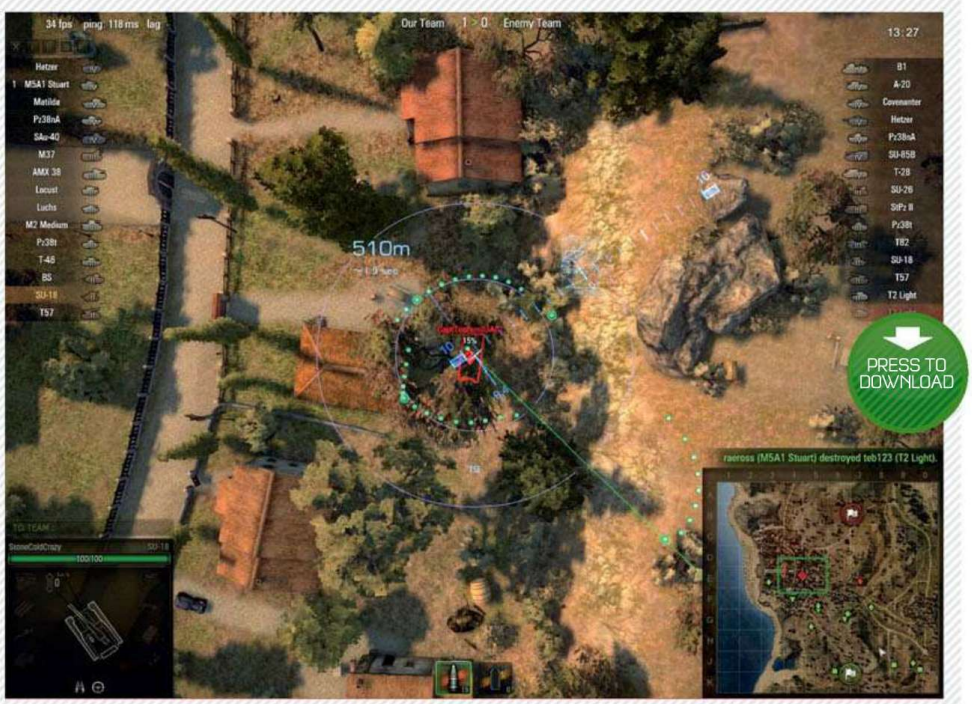
This mod remains one of the most popular out there. J1mbo's Crosshair Mod is all about clarity – with bold, simple lines giving you no doubt about where you're aiming, and no chance of your gunsight clashing with the scenery or being lost in a busy background.

This mod also does the same for the rest of your HUD, bringing all the most vital information to the fore. It provides tankers with a much bolder, clearer percentage value that tells you how healthy your tank is, as well as letting you see how far away your target is and how much ammunition you have left. Best of all, it replaces the old reload indicator with a timer that lets you know exactly how long you need to wait until a new shell is in the breech – exact to a hundredth of a second. No mod has ever been more precise.



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2 DAR ARTILLERY SIGHT

This cool mod adds a wealth of new information for stat-happy gunners. Your first look down the DAR Artillery Sight might be a confusing one, but it doesn't take long to understand what the new blue sight is telling you.

First of all, you'll notice that you have a much bigger, much clearer rangefinder at the top left, and next to that is a number giving you your shell travel time. This is incredibly useful and, as any gunner will be aware, knowing whether it's going to take 1.5 or 2 seconds for your shell to hit its target can make a huge difference. Opposite the rangefinder are two indicators that show the gun elevation and max firing range – helpful in understanding whether your target might be close to extreme range, and also what sort of trajectory your shell is going to take. Across your sight, the long blue ruler is your orientation guide, letting you know the horizontal angle of your gun.

The DAR Artillery Sight is a boon for anyone who likes to play as artillery, not to mention being a real help when it comes to tracking moving targets.

3 THE SERVER-SIDE RETICULE

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This mod doesn't do anything particularly spectacular but legions of players have found it very useful. The service The Server-Side Reticule performs is letting you know exactly where the server thinks your gun is pointing right now, not where your own gunsight says it's pointing.

Sometimes these are exactly the same spot, but quite often your PC is busy smoothing out your aiming and you're not aware of how the server might be catching up with your own input. This mod lets you know exactly where your next shell is going to fly when you fire – and you might find that, on rare occasions at least, it will make the difference between a hit and a miss. In this screenshot you can see it working in conjunction with J1mbo's Crosshair Mod.

When you come to install the mod, be sure to enable the reticule in your game settings (you'll find the option under the first tab). Hopefully you'll soon see an improvement in combat efficiency.



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THE TACTICAL TABLET

AKA the thinking tanker's tool

This mod is a real work of genius and many clans see it as an essential tool in their quest for victory, being a fantastic communication aid that can even break through the language barrier.

The Tactical Tablet is a tool that lets budding Pattons sketch out diagrams and battleplans, before sharing them with each other. It's easy to use and appears at the touch of a key, so it's ideal when it comes to quickly scribbling out directions or suggestions for your team. Those directions could be as simple as a few arrows for suggested avenues of attack, or perhaps a line that illustrates where you'll gather to make a stand. Simple but hugely effective.

There are two small catches though. First of all, if you want to share your tactics with your team members, they'll also need to have The Tactical Tablet installed – so be sure to share the mod with your pals. Secondly the tablet doesn't update in real time, but generates a code every time you modify it – and you need to send this code to your teammates via some form of chat, such as an instant messenger. They can then paste this into their client and update their tablets.

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It might sound a little roundabout and fiddly, but it's actually fairly simple for a clan or group to organise this, and it also means The Tactical Tablet has an extra advantage: these tactic codes can be saved and reloaded at later times – meaning that once you sketch out a particular battleplan or tactic, you can keep the code and reuse it in future battles when conditions call for it. Not so bad, eh?

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Modding



THE XVM CONFIGS

Weighty stats for serious tankers

The eXtended Visualisation Mods, or XVMs, may be a bit fiddly to install but for many players they're well worth the time invested. They are a combination of a statistical analysis module and an in-game overlay that provides more detailed information on the tanks taking part in each battle. Statto heaven, in other words.

Before you enter into combat, you'll see a breakdown of the stats behind all of the players involved, which is presented as their Win Rate and their Efficiency. The former is pretty straightforward, while the latter is a rating that typically ranges between 1,000-1,300 for average players and up to or above 2,000 for the very best. This is your clue as to how good these players are.

XVM isn't one single mod but actually comes in many different flavours that include different interface tweaks and different modes of presentation, such as ENGiAND's XVM Config and Vertius XVM Config (pictured), and you can pick whichever one you prefer.

However, installing these stats-heavy mods can be a little more complicated than it is for other mods. Firstly you'll need to grab a copy of the latest Dokan Library file system – the link to the website is on the left.

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Then you can download the XVM mod that appeals to you and install it the usual way, copying the relevant directories and files into your \res_mods directory. The mod will also include its own executable file (a .exe file) which you'll then use to run *World of Tanks* instead of the usual executable. After that, stats galore will be yours to ponder over.

You can track down a useful beginner's guide and a raft of handy further information about XVM on the ever-helpful *World of Tanks* official forums.

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THE BEST OF THE REST

Funky cameras and bombastic sounds

1 CAMERA ZOOM MOD

Lets you see a little further than you might otherwise, giving you the chance to pull back your point of view beyond the limit usually imposed. You'll still be subject to the same spotting restrictions and won't be able to see tanks that you and your teammates haven't yet caught sight of, but this can be very useful for getting a greater overview of the battlefield. The only downside is that it'll take a little longer to zoom back into sniper mode if you need to take a precise shot.

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2 GNOMEFATHER'S HISTORICAL GUN SOUNDS MOD

This mod adds a real sense of wallop to your game. While *World of Tanks* further improved its sound effects with the update to version 0.8.3, this mod is still worth trying out. It gives a duller, more hollow sound to hits and ricochets – really giving you the sense that you're inside a tank with less ability to hear what's going on outside. To complement this, there's also a very different and rather deeper thud to many of the firing sounds, while the sound of larger shells reloading is a fantastic brassy *clunk*.



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3 METAL GEAR SIXTH SENSE MOD

This mod is definitely one of the silliest out there and not much more than a one-trick pony, but hey, it's still a pretty neat trick. The Sixth Sense perk lets your tank commander know when you've been detected, usually in the form of a lightbulb icon that pops onto the screen. With this mod, that icon is transformed into an exclamation mark that recalls spy extraordinaire, Solid Snake.

Not only that, but you'll also hear the familiar *Metal Gear Solid* alert sound ring out – something that gives us the heebie jeebies. At the moment, you'll need *XVM* installed for this mod to work properly.



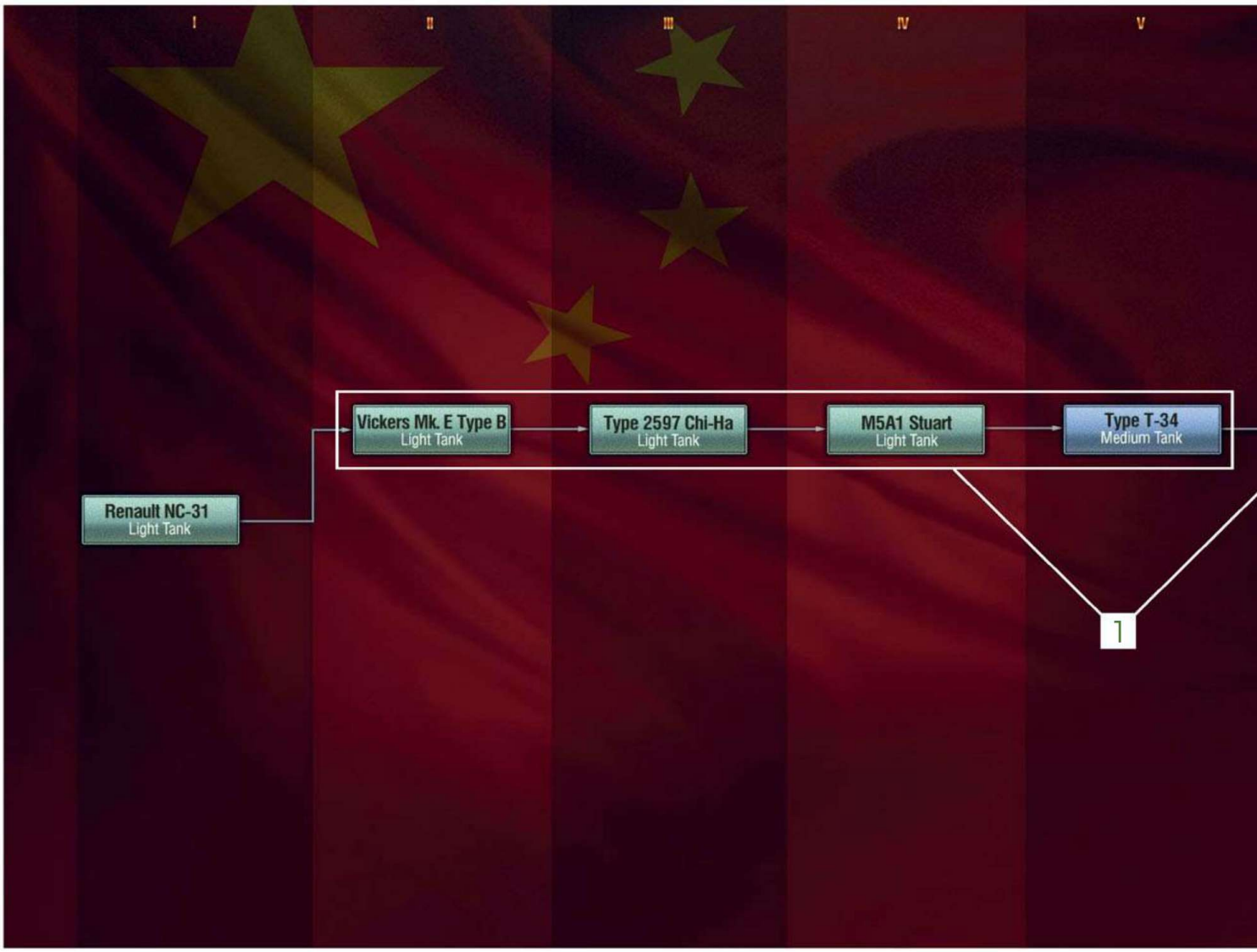
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4 MY LITTLE PONY MOD

Bizarrely popular among tankers the world over, possibly due to Reddit's obsession with the sparkly pastel equines. Rather than being a small, simple mod that alters one or two aspects of the game, this 5GB beast completely overhauls your game, changing sounds, graphics and in-game effects. Most users download it via a torrent, and in return they get a game that's now based entirely around My Little Pony: Friendship Is Magic, with their tanks leaving rainbow tracks, their crew transformed into ponies and the music and sounds of war replaced with, well, something much cuter. You have been warned.

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Tech tree analysis



1 NC-31, VICKERS

The low to mid tier Chinese light and medium tanks aren't strictly Chinese. A hodgepodge of originating countries means there's no set playstyle for tankers exploring the early part of the Chinese light tank tree. The NC-31, for example, is fast and well armed, where the Vickers is painfully slow to accelerate and suffers from poor accuracy. The Chinese tree won't teach you to specialise your play, but it will offer a range of tactics and battlefield roles for jacks of all trades.

2 IS-2

Some of the Chinese tanks take another country's base machine and modify it, as with Chinese variant of the French Renault NC-31; others just nick another country's vehicle entirely. The IS-2 is functionally the same as a fully upgraded Soviet IS. They're both heavy tanks, both nippy and both pack powerful cannons. The few differences can be found in the engine – the Chinese IS-2 is slightly slower up hills – and in hitpoints: the Soviet IS has slightly more.



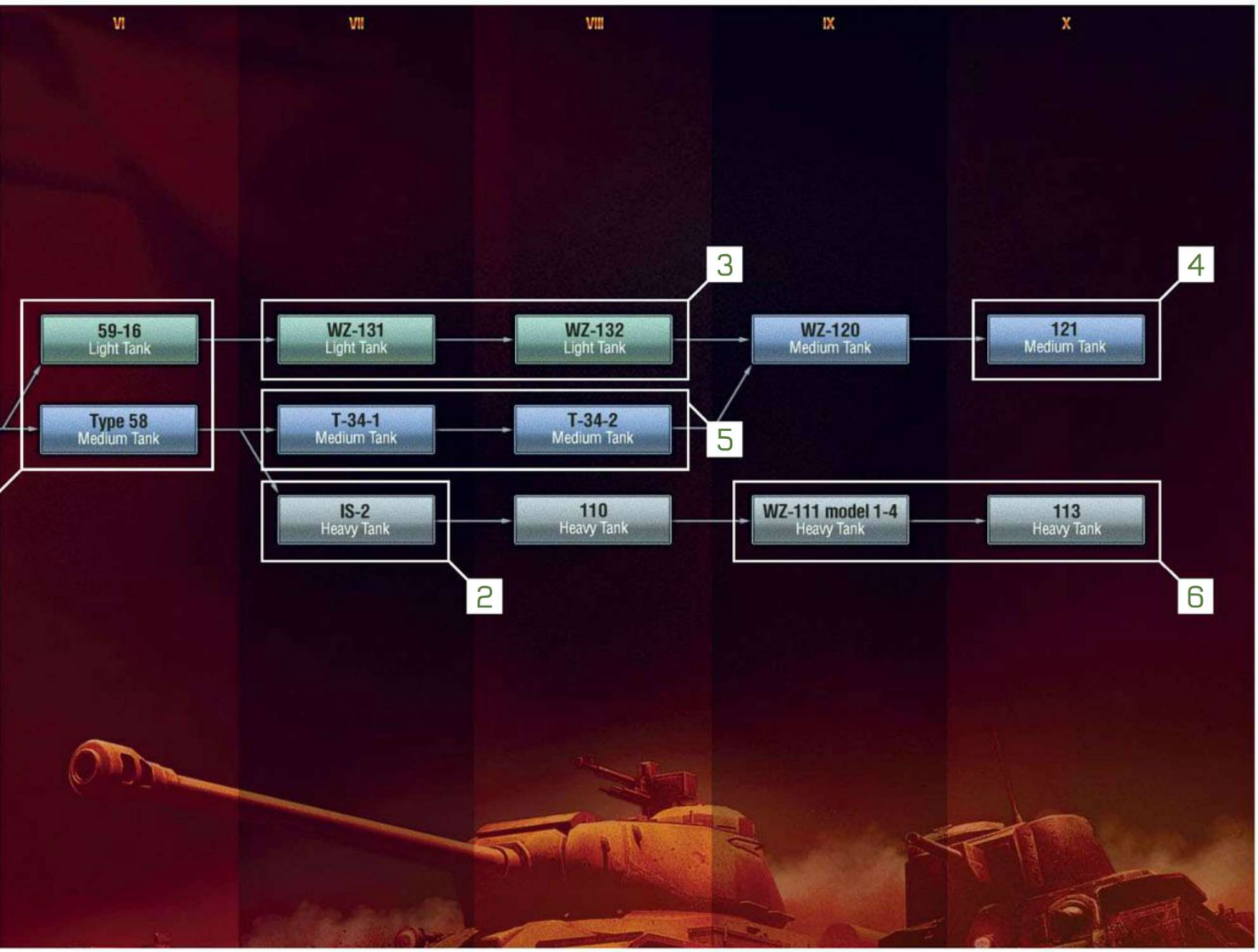
3 WZ-131, WZ-132

The WZ-131 and WZ-132 are some of the latest tier light tanks available to *World of Tanks* players. They're also some of the few playable machines designed by the Chinese military itself, being built specifically for the country's varied terrain. The results are tough little machines blessed with more armour than you might expect for a light tank. You're free to play them more like mediums, albeit with a pleasing top speed and acceleration that make the 131 and 132 fantastic hit and run options.

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CHINA

Where other trees offer wholesale strengths and weaknesses, Chinese tanks have no particular set theme. You'll find fast, slow, well and weakly armoured vehicles in here, with a range of guns. Not much in the way of tank destroyers or SPGs yet though.



4 121

It's a medium, but thanks to its ludicrously powerful gun, the 121 feels more like a heavy tank on a carb free diet. The mighty tier X 122mm cannon the 121 packs hits with enough force to make a serious dent in all of the battlefield's biggest boys, and – thanks to the 121's medium designation – it can also fire faster than you might expect. The downside comes in terms of penetration: the 121's gun does a lot of damage, but it won't be punching through thick frontal armour.

5 T-34-1, T-34-2

The T-34-1 sits lower than its Soviet counterpart, making it a trickier target to hit. That, and a few other upgrades, are reflected in its tier: where the Soviet T-34 sits in tier V, the Chinese T-34-1 resides in tier VII – so it gets pitted against tougher foes. The T-34-2 is even less like its inspiration. It isn't a retooled version built around the same hull, but rather a totally new Chinese machine that instead took lessons from the ubiquity and usefulness of the vanilla T-34.



6 111, 113

The heavy tanks at the tail end of the Chinese tech tree start to share characteristics. Where earlier machines in the tree flit back and forth between strengths and weaknesses, the 111 and 113 heavies are both surprisingly quick and do great damage with their cannons. Their weakness is hull armour, but it's not totally bad news: the 111 and 113's armour is thin, but it slopes at a convenient angle, meaning the skilled – or lucky – will be able to deflect shots that should rip them open.

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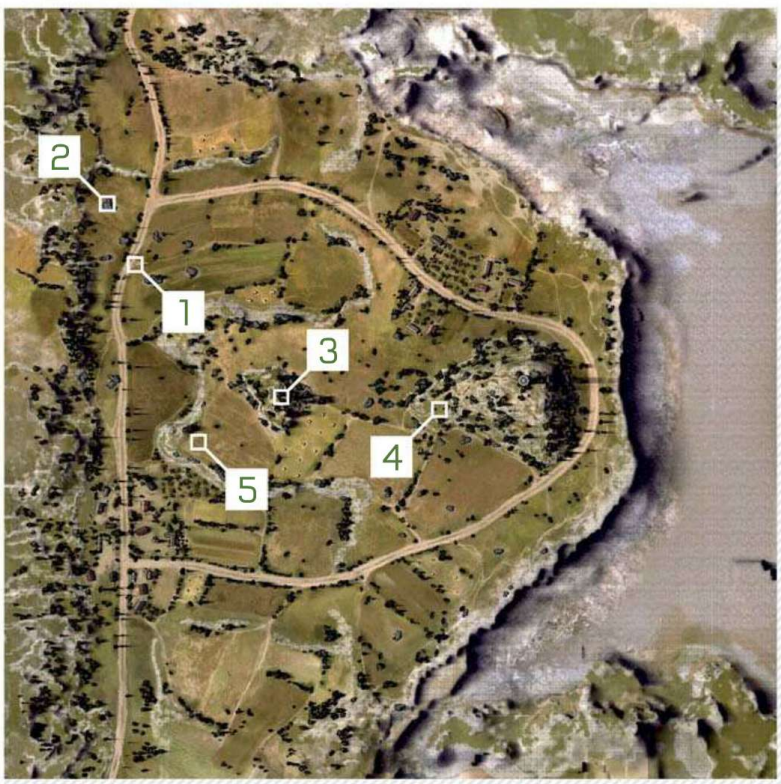
Maps

BEST LAID PLANS

There are 34 diverse, deadly maps to battle over in *World of Tanks*. Dominate them like a boss with our vital intel.

From grimy industrial ports to bombed-out villages, arid deserts to snow-capped peaks, *World of Tanks*' eclectic theatres of war are crammed with strategic possibilities.

Wargaming will often tweak maps with each fresh update. Case in point: Update 8.5, in which Pearl River was unveiled (get the lowdown on p.41). In the meantime, these handy guides will get new players up to speed – and maybe even make grizzled veterans think a bit, too. Good hunting.





CLIFF

◆ **Map type** Mixed ◆ **Camo type** Summer

Inspired by the shorelines of the Normandy coast, both teams are connected through a valley 1 on the extreme west of the map. Large boulders 2 offer cover (though it's scant) in the north of the valley, while a small town provides cover to the south.

The eastern portion of the map is elevated, with two large hills 3 4 providing partial cover from enemy fire. An overlooking position near the centre of the map 5 allows tanks to fire into the valley from above. Beware here, as the cover tends to be pretty much worthless, especially since it's separated by yawning stretches of open ground – arty campers hidden in double bushes will likely pose a serious threat.

Nevertheless, the map offers multiple attack routes, with careful coordination and flanking likely to play a significant role.

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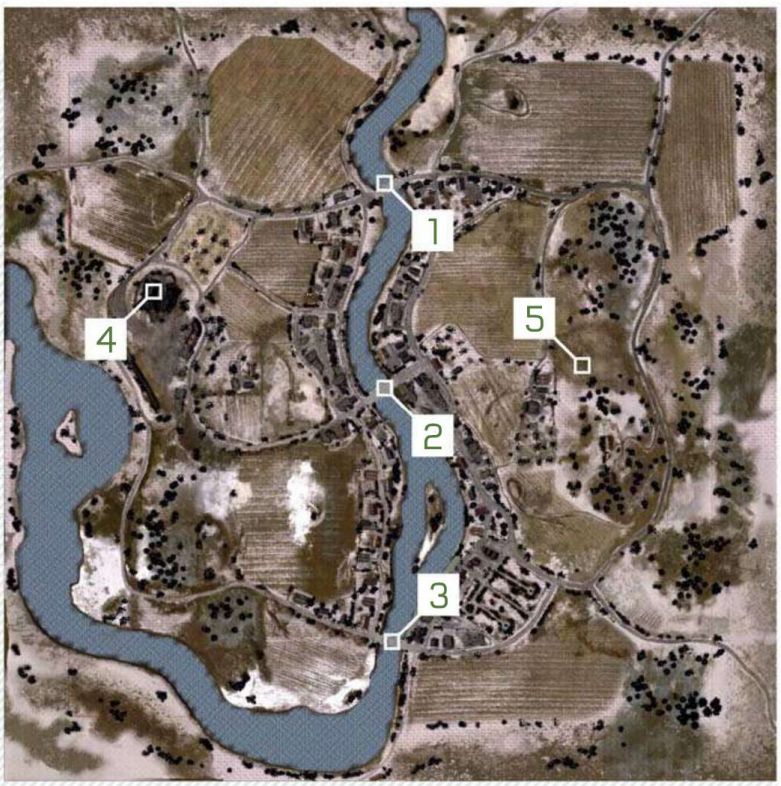


ERLENBERG

◆ **Map type** Open ◆ **Camo type** Winter

A large river splits this map in half, with three easily-blockable bridges 1 2 3 acting as chokepoints between the east and west. A town – perfect for ambushes – surrounds the centre bridge on both sides of the water, while the north and south bridges have only scant surrounding structures for cover.

A looming castle 4 overlooks the west half of the map on a meaty hilltop; its thick walls offer substantial cover and supporting fire positions. Hills 5 overlook the city from the east, with sufficient vegetation to provide some concealment for tanks. This map's rather open element makes it a strong choice for SPGs, while the hard terrain means lighter scout types can travel quickly.







FISHERMAN'S BAY

◆ **Map type** Open ◆ **Camo type** Summer

The leafy green map offers a challenging combination of open spaces and irregular terrain. The meandering narrow streets of the seaport 1 on the eastern flank can be advantageous, while sloping hills 2 covered with bushes provide manifold ambush opportunities. Don't miss a trick here.

Meanwhile, the packed streets of the quaint fisherman's village are perfect for both seeking cover and unleashing surprise attacks – they're a particular haven for heavy tanks to pounce upon smaller foes, who won't find it as easy to race clear of danger as on the western portion of the map. Conversely, the open spaces 3 to the west favour tank destroyers, who can snipe from afar, and medium tanks, who can take advantage of their speed to flank their enemies.

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Maps

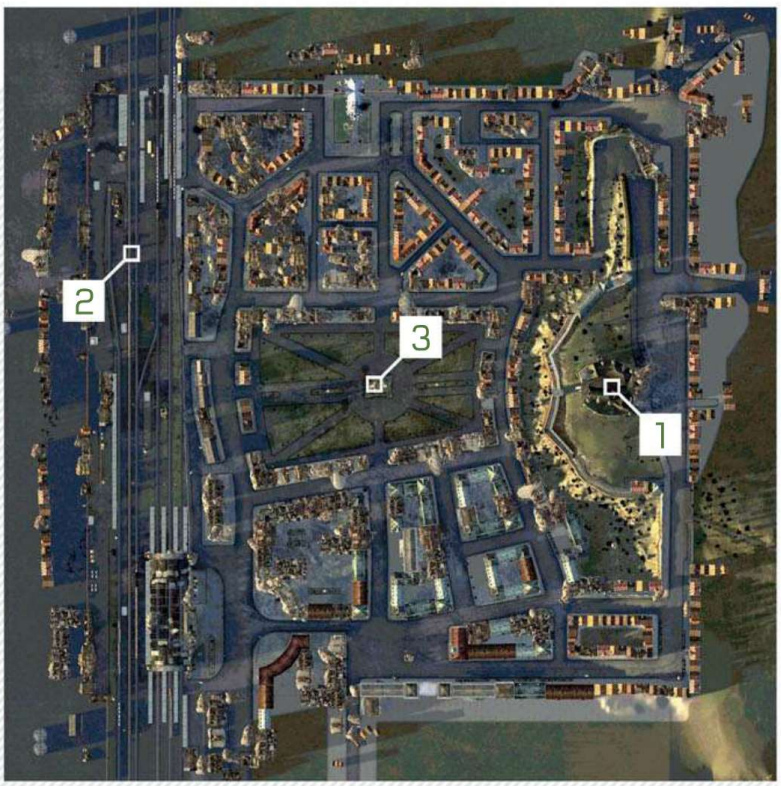


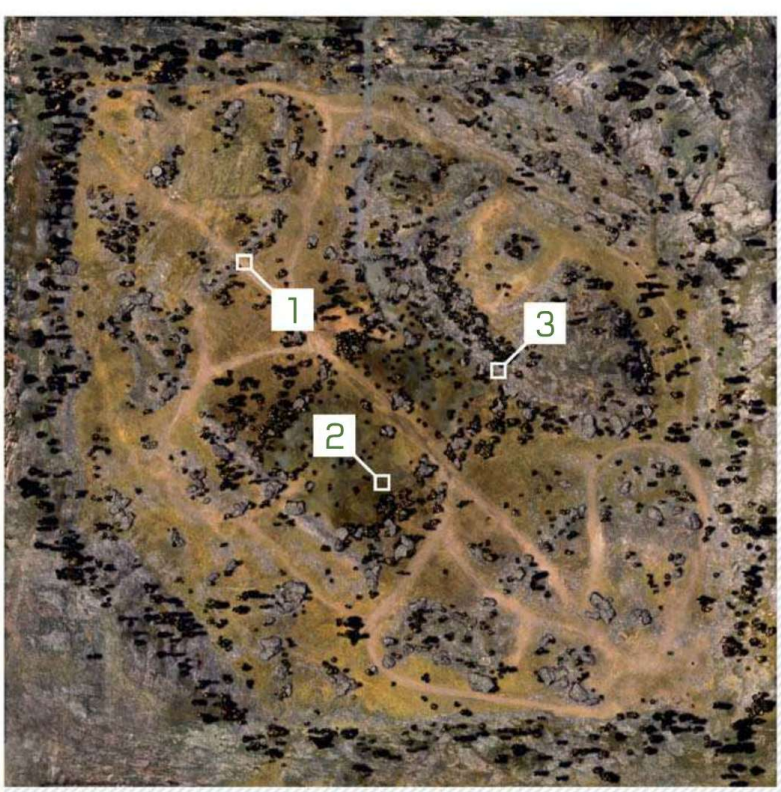
HIMMELSDORF

◆ **Map type** Closed ◆ **Camo type** Summer

This labyrinth of streets and squares means vulnerable artillery find themselves at a disadvantage, while tank destroyers also have to take care – although the latter's opportunities to cause some serious carnage at this location are high. Light and medium tanks, in contrast, will find their superior speed and manoeuvrability comes in very useful.

A castle surrounded by an open lawn 1 lies to the east of the urban sprawl (this area attracts lots of activity), while a railroad 2 runs the height of the map to the west. Perhaps the most intriguing – and certainly the most dangerous section – is the middle square, 3 which often plays host to tank battle royales. Beware.







KARELIA

◆ **Map type** Open ◆ **Camo type** Summer

Swamps, rocks and cliffs determine the avenues of approach on this map. With sparse protection and no buildings, artillery thrives here. As far as composition goes, it is a valley of sorts – with a long straight road 1 diagonally intersecting the middle from the north-west to the south-east. Boggy swamps 2 surround the road towards the centre, while a cliff ridge 3 looms to the east.

Teams tend to peel off around the sides to orchestrate flanking attacks, often leaving the tempting centre (which admittedly looks like a killzone from afar) unguarded. The cliff offers an excellent vantage – and therefore blasting – point, but be sure to use pacier tanks that can move uphill rapidly. Otherwise you run the risk of being picked off while attempting to manoeuvre into position.

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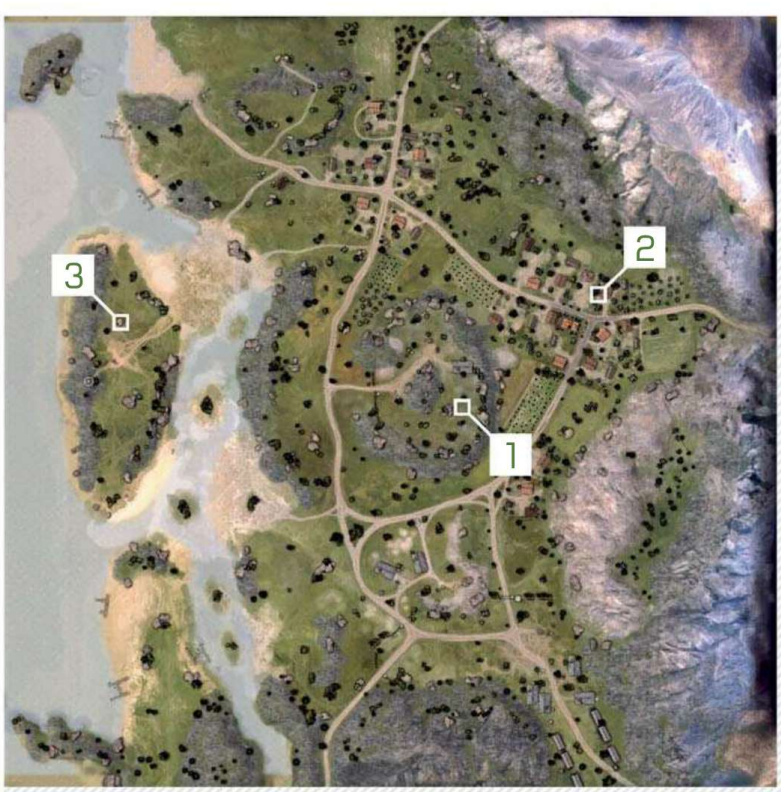
MALINOVKA

◆ **Map type** Open ◆ **Camo type** Summer

On this green and pleasant map, teams are separated by a sprawling open field, 1 ideal for artillery and defensive operations. To the west looms a large hill. 2 The simplest, bloodiest option is to combine forces and mount a blitzkrieg attack across this open ground, but the chances of annihilation are equally as high as the likelihood of victory. The apparent lack of cover is why this map often attracts 'camping' tactics.

An alternative method involves flanking from the west, where more wooded areas, 3 a proliferation of boulders 4 plus the odd farmhouse 5 offer an element of protection – but you'll need to move quickly before the battle's time limit elapses.







MINES

◆ **Map type** Mixed ◆ **Camo type** Summer

A flat hilltop in the centre of this sunny map 1 provides both excellent firing and scouting positions, but its extremely open aspect means climbing the hill to claim it can be a dangerous affair, so cling to any available boulders. Northeast of the hill lies the small village of Pagorki, 2 which provides plenty of cover for advancing forces, unless the enemy has seized control of the higher ground, in which case it can be bombarded.

Meanwhile, west of the hill – and surrounded by shallow water – is a small island 3 that offers excellent cover while providing a large firing zone. Remember, though, that fording to reach it will slow your tanks, especially heavier variants, to a temporary crawl. If your tank isn't fairly nippy in the first place, try and avoid this zone.

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Maps



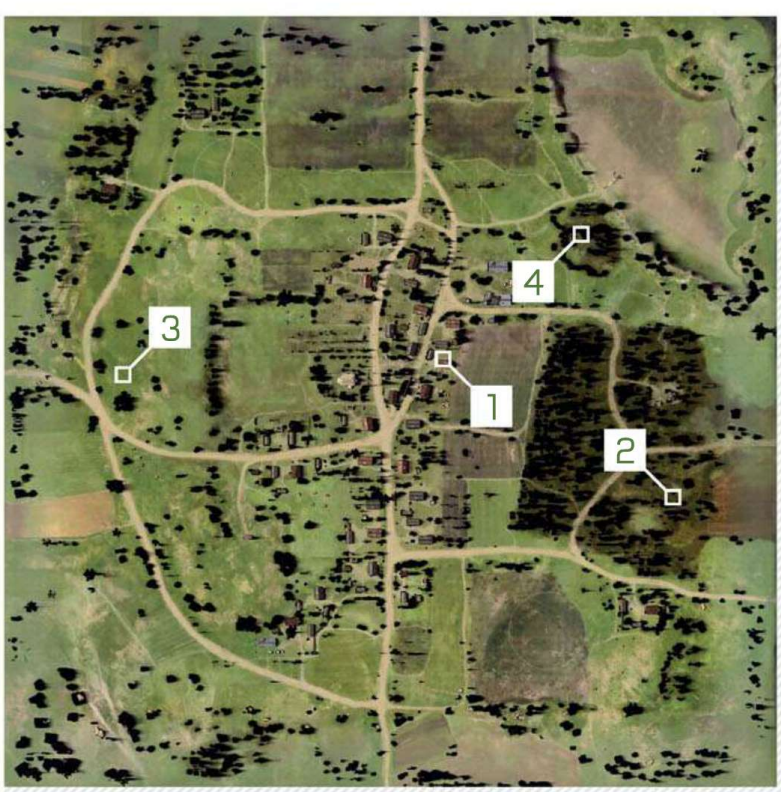
MOUNTAIN PASS

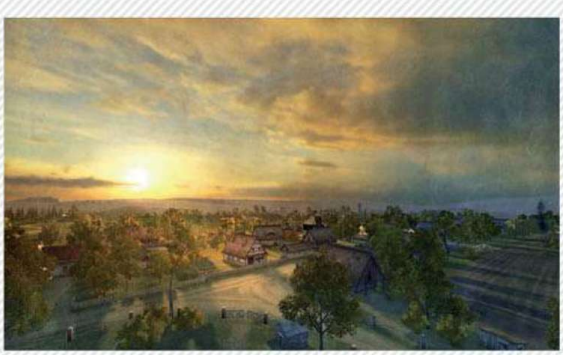
◆ **Map type** Mixed ◆ **Camo type** Summer

This large, varied map boasts narrow passes and rough, stony terrain. The bridge 1 near the centre is a natural choke point and is often filled with downed tanks, so beware of the snipers that will flock to perch on adjacent hillsides – especially the southern pass 2. This sector often quickly turns into a killing field.

Also keep an eye out for smaller hills that vehicles, especially artillery, can climb to achieve some kind of vantage point; otherwise artillery has only limited effectiveness on this map. Heavy tanks often gather by the southern ice road 3 – indeed, it's often where the most vicious tank fighting takes place, especially since SPGs don't really have any natural vantage points in this area.







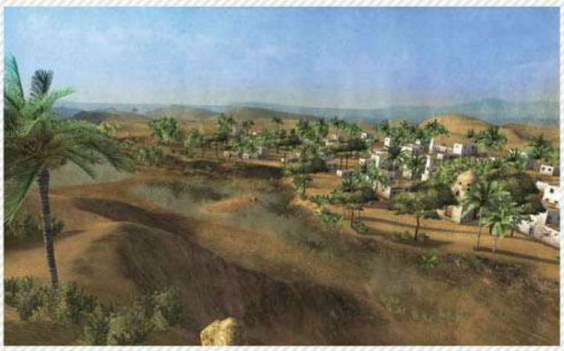
MUROVANKA

◆ **Map type** Open ◆ **Camo type** Summer

A small town 1 dominates the centre of this map, with a sprawling forest 2 providing concealment in the east and a ridge of higher ground 3 to the west. The forest provides effective concealment but lacks cover from fire, whereas the town has plentiful cover but lacks concealment. The former tends to be where battles are lost and won on this map.

Naturally, the dense trees offer formidable camouflage bonuses to anyone in the forest – granting tank destroyers and artillery a major advantage. Nevertheless, attacking from the south won't necessarily result in carnage; choosing summer camo and launching scouts from the small wooded patch in the north-east 4 can often result in relatively effective scouting runs.

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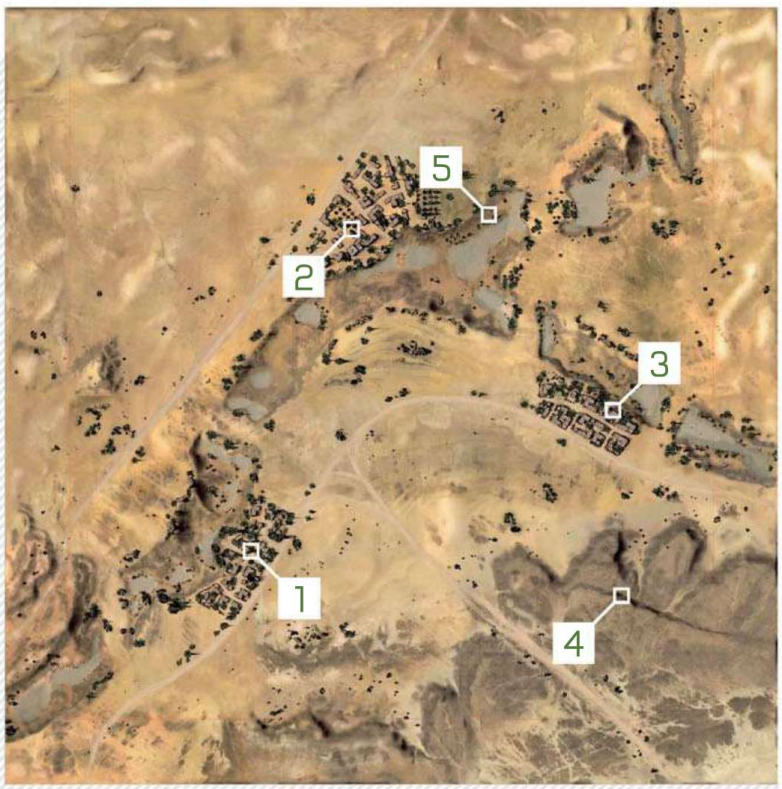


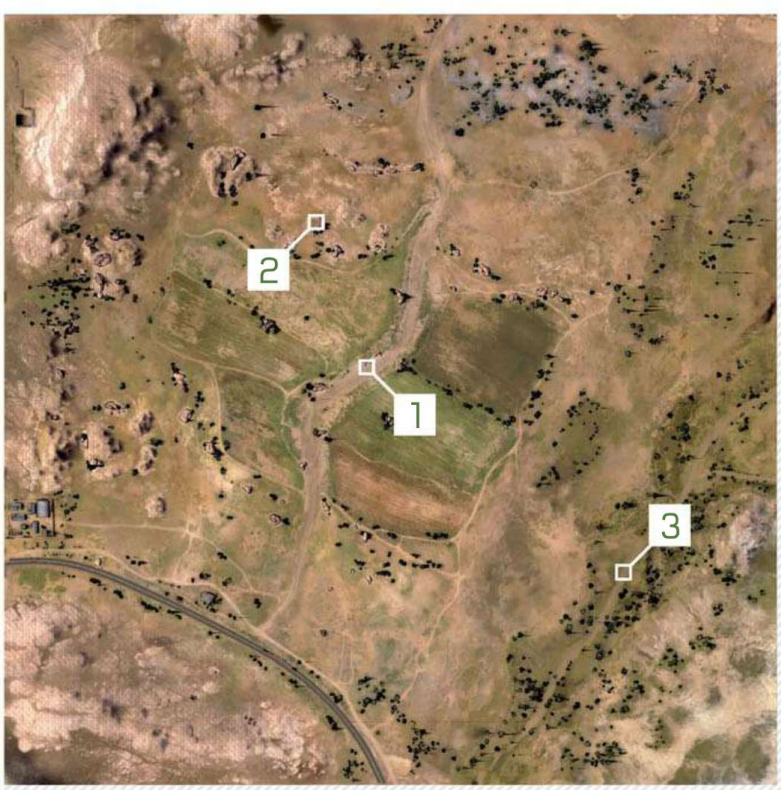
SAND RIVER

◆ **Map type** Open ◆ **Camo type** Desert

An open map that offers little in the way of concealment, but plentiful cover opportunities owing to the proliferation of sand dunes. Three small villages 1 2 3 provide temporary cover at best but are easily ruined, so must be used cautiously. Ridges 4 5 offer defenders cover, concealment and excellent firing positions.

An excellent arena for run 'n' gun tactics, Sand River suits more mobile tanks. Its layout recalls El Halluf, although the large amount of dunes, buildings and cliffs here tend to plague slower tanks with low gun depression/elevation. In contrast, tanks with strong depression/elevation stats and accurate guns will be able to take full advantage of this open but chaotic terrain.







STEPPES

◆ **Map type** Open ◆ **Camo type** Summer

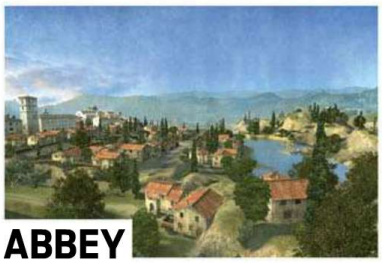
A rolling expanse of fields and hills decorate this quaint, farmland-like map. Open fields, varying ditches, and small hills and rises litter the environment, providing prime ambush spots. This layout means you're able to seek out vertical cover from SPGs or direct cover from other tanks, but never both at once – so battles tend to be fast paced and fluid, with little camping.

The sunken centre road 1 that dominates the map offers the most obvious cover, but has a tendency to be transformed into an early-game killzone if both forces make a play for it – so stay alert. Two potential attack points that promise success include a boulder field 2 to the west that obscures line of sight, and the gentle slopes/partially sunken area 3 that can be found to the east.

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Maps

AND THE REST



ABBEY

◆ **Map type** Mixed ◆ **Camo type** Summer

A large abbey and town dominate this map's centre, with three roads allowing passage from north and south. Westward, a scenic valley offers protection against artillery fire.



AIRFIELD

◆ **Map type** Open ◆ **Camo type** Desert

Packed with towering mountains and narrow, winding valleys, you can opt to engage in a sniper duel across the central road or go close-quarters in the twin port towns.



ARCTIC REGION

◆ **Map type** Mixed ◆ **Camo type** Winter

Steep hills, rocky encampments, plenty of twists and turns plus a raft of hidey holes to hunker down in keeps tankers on their toes as they battle through this icy deathtrap.



DRAGON RIDGE

◆ **Map type** Mixed ◆ **Camo type** Summer

This unusual, unique Asian map boasts a spectacular lake, bamboo bushes and jagged mountain ridges; it has proved a popular choice for medium and heavy tank types.



EL HALLUF

◆ **Map type** Open ◆ **Camo type** Desert

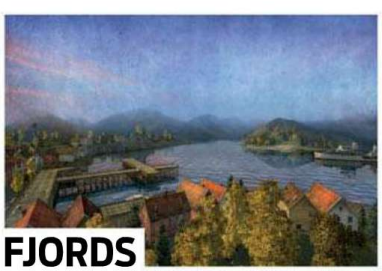
A large river valley crammed with rocks, vegetation, and a small village surrounding a dried-out river bed. Large sloping hills on either side offer multiple firing opportunities.



ENSK

◆ **Map type** Mixed ◆ **Camo type** Summer

A mixture of city outskirts and suburbs, with railroads spanning and dividing the map. Take advantage of defensive choke points and cover off open areas with your vehicles.



FJORDS

◆ **Map type** Mixed ◆ **Camo type** Summer

Huge mountains and narrow valleys offer potential rewards in battle, whether you're engaging in fire duels across the gulf or going close-quarters at the nearest port.



HIGHWAY

◆ **Map type** Mixed ◆ **Camo type** Summer

A calming autumnal feel permeates through this map. Expansive leafy areas encourage riotous open engagements, while city blocks prove advantageous for close combat.



KOMARIN

◆ **Map type** Open ◆ **Camo type** Summer

The three main tactical routes on this map are all divided by largely impassable rivers. Cover-friendly wooded areas, small villages and water abound, though.



LAKEVILLE

◆ **Map type** Mixed ◆ **Camo type** Summer

A varied theatre of combat, with an isolated mountain valley on one flank and city blocks on the other. A large lake in the middle offers SPGs a potentially clear field of fire.

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LIVE OAKS

◆ **Map type** Mixed ◆ **Camo type** Summer

A treacherous bog dominates the centre of this map, with a sizeable village located to the north-west. A railway bridge and ford add both geographical and tactical variety.



PROKHOROVKA

◆ **Map type** Open ◆ **Camo type** Summer

Generally open but hilly terrain around a vital railroad, with groups of trees providing shelter for tank destroyers. Home to some memorable light tank vs artillery clashes.



PROVINCE

◆ **Map type** Mixed ◆ **Camo type** Summer

Hills on the periphery of this Mediterranean map are dotted with pretty buildings and winding streets, while a sprawling central open area encourages rapid strikes.



REDSHIRE

◆ **Map type** Open ◆ **Camo type** Summer

This undulating map is dominated by rolling hills. The village of Redshire provides welcome cover between the patches of high ground. The perfect battlefield for artillery.



RUINBERG

◆ **Map type** Mixed ◆ **Camo type** Summer

Concentric city streets adjacent to an overgrown park allow for the employment of a diverse range of tactics. Artillery sight lines are limited, with debris providing cover.



SEAPORT

◆ **Map type** Mixed ◆ **Camo type** Summer

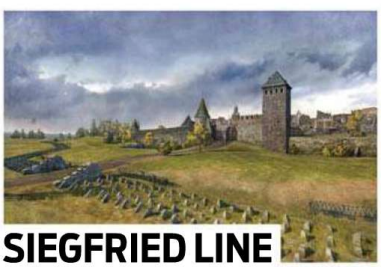
Players are surrounded by dilapidated warehouses and rail carriages – while a uncluttered space in the map's centre consists of an undulating, open area and railroad tracks.



SERENE COAST

◆ **Map type** Open ◆ **Camo type** Summer

A scenic coastal area bounded by ocean and mountains, with railroad dividing the territory from north to south. The small town often becomes a point of contention.



SIEGFRIED LINE

◆ **Map type** Mixed ◆ **Camo type** Summer

To the west are open fields with little cover, excellent for flanking attacks. To the east is a town and cover for tankers plucky enough to enter its confines.



SOUTH COAST

◆ **Map type** Open ◆ **Camo type** Summer

This rugged-terrain map promotes flanking, ambushes and direct attacks. Take advantage of the numerous hollows between rocks, but beware of hidden foes.



SWAMP

◆ **Map type** Open ◆ **Camo type** Summer

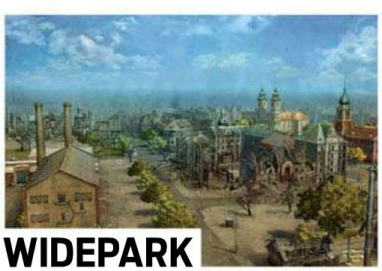
Flank routes offer multiple opportunities for surprise attacks and diversionary operations. The boggy terrain in the middle is an obstacle, but also an crucial tactical location.



WESTFIELD

◆ **Map type** Open ◆ **Camo type** Summer

Lush and verdant forests, fields, farmland and multiple villages make up this stunning map. Ridges prove perfect for ambushes and open ground leaves heavier tanks vulnerable.



WIDEPARK

◆ **Map type** Mixed ◆ **Camo type** Summer

An urban map featuring grand civic buildings, a central factory zone plus an extensive park area. A variety of cover types allow for focused attacks in crucial directions.

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Tank in Focus



MAUS

DETAILS ◆ **Name** Panzer VIII Maus ◆ **Nationality** German ◆ **Class** Heavy ◆ **Crew** 6 ◆ **Hit Points** 3000 ◆ **Speed Limit** 20km/h ◆ **Tier** X ◆ **Cost** 6,100,000

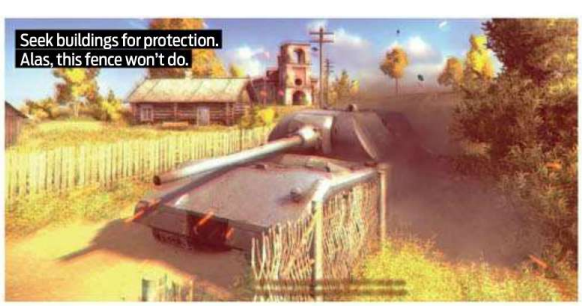
At a glance

Pros

- Excellent armour that'll effortlessly repel many smaller calibre guns
- More hit points than any other tank in the game (a meaty 3000)
- Weapon is both accurate and powerful (Aiming time is 2.9 seconds, alpha damage averages a staggering 490 – enough to one-shot many smaller pieces of armour)
- Virtually impervious to ramming, allowing it to dominate battles fought at close-range
- Highly effective on dense city maps

Cons

- Extremely slow (it has the dubious honour of having the worst max speed in the tier at 20km/h)
- Slow turret traverse (14º per second)
- Rear-mounted turret, making aiming tricky
- Very large silhouette, from any angle
- Below average penetration for a tier X (a meagre 246mm)
- A priority target for deadly artillery



Seek buildings for protection. Alas, this fence won't do.



Hulking gun-metal killer – meet cute poppy field.



The Maus never made it into full service. This matters little in *World of Tanks*.

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The darkest nightmare of Allied infantry, the 180-ton steel German giant known as the Maus was designed to terrorise the battlefields of Europe. Happily for the Allies, it never actually made it onto the fields of battle.

Development of this tank lasted from March 1942 until June 1944. The Krupp company planned to create 141, but the regular bombing by British Air Forces disrupted this plan and in 1943 – during the 'Ruhr Pocket' operation – the Krupp military plant suffered heinous damage.

Only two prototypes of the Maus (one with turret; the other curiously without) underwent trials in late 1944, and an incomplete model was later identified and captured by British forces towards the climax of the Second World War.

In *World of Tanks*, though, the Maus remains very much armed and dangerous.



COMBAT TACTICS
MASTER THE **MAUS** WITH THESE BATTLE TIPS



Fronting Up
The Maus is *the* vehicle for the front line, arguably without equal in the game. It can take insane amounts of damage, plus shield allies from enemy fire. Traditionally, city maps are considered to be the ideal place for heavy tanks to ply their deadly trade; you can either hold position or push the flanks, while the chances of being targeted by artillery in built-up spaces remain low. Don't ignore your weak spots though: hide the lower glacis, and rotate your turret so enemies have no opportunity to aim at its sides. Also, beware overconfidence – the hulking Maus is powerful but far from impregnable.



Tank Rush
Planning is vital during each stage of a battle, a lesson generally applicable to any element of *World of Tanks*. Don't immediately *Blitzkrieg* simply because you can't see anyone ahead of you – enemies can be lurking around the corner, and the chances are 95% of them will be far more manoeuvrable than your leaden Maus. If you're positive there are only a few tanks ahead of you, gather your teammates for support – *then* edge forward.



Slow Coach
The Maus is sluggish, making it challenging to alter position or seek cover quickly. Meanwhile, its giant size lets enemies scout it quickly – plus any savvy artillery will move to target it as soon as possible. Compounding these problems are surprisingly mediocre shell penetration and poor accuracy, making it impossible for you to blast foes at a decent distance. The Maus is an up-close killer; it's getting there that's the problem.



Weak Points
When you position your tank at an angle, foes are able to target your track. Eventually a shell will likely penetrate it and strike the armour, which is a meagre 80mm thick. At long range you shouldn't be nervous, but in close combat ideally position the Maus to increase the chances of a ricochet from incoming fire. During a facehug against almost any tank, use your hefty weight to your advantage. Ramming damage is not high, but mounts up.



Mates Matter
The effectiveness of the Maus is heavily dependent on the map, a significant issue when it comes to choosing this slice of armour. In valleys or locales where you can secrete yourself away from artillery it can wreak havoc, but on an open map or any area where a Maus finds itself isolated, it becomes a easy target that's extremely vulnerable. Teammate support is vital when driving a Maus, so stay in packs and *never* go lone wolf.



Map Tips Pt. 1
On the Ruinberg map stick to the city portions and avoid open terrain like the plague. At the onset of battle, move to section G3 and use the destroyed building as cover. From there you can shoot through the embrasure. If enemies are rushing through the third line or adopting defensive tactics, you'll be able to inflict punishment on them while remaining protected. If there are a multitude of enemy tanks, shift to section F2 and target them from behind the corner. Push the third line or even switch to section J2 if enemies break through the small town.



Map Tips Pt. 2
On Malinovka stay near the monastery or barns. On El Halluf, you can hide behind the mountains. On Sand River, get to the city and attempt to hide from enemy fire. On Steppes, use stones as cover and fire on foes from there. Prokhorovka is one of the most unsuitable maps for the Maus; you can be scouted and destroyed before you even get into position. Move carefully and use existing buildings in the village for cover – any other actions will lead to certain doom.



Gearing Up
To increase the efficiency of the Maus in battle, consider purchasing equipment including the Tank Gun Rammer, Vertical Stabiliser and Enhanced Gun Laying Drive. They'll help you control the sluggish Maus in crucial close combat situations, as well as improving your aim and helping you get off shots more rapidly.

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Famous battle



Need to know

Who
British vs Germans/Italians

When
23 October – 11 November 1942

Where
El Alamein, Egypt

THE SECOND BATTLE OF EL ALAMEIN

WWII was fought on manifold fronts, from Europe to the Pacific. However, the theatre of Northern Africa also played a key tactical role in proceedings – and, possibly Kursk aside, produced the singularly most memorable tank battle in the entire conflict. The Battle of El Alamein was a multi-tiered affair, yet its climactic episode not only brought about the loosening of the Nazi chokehold in The Dark Continent but also decided the outcome of an absorbing personal duel between British/German tank commanders supreme Bernard 'Monty' Montgomery and his opposing number Erwin 'The Desert Fox' Rommel.

Africa had been a warzone since Mussolini's declaration of war on Britain and France on 10 June, 1940. Il Duce desired to extend his Mediterranean empire into Egypt and seize control of the logistically and psychologically crucial Suez Canal – and with the British desperately overextended in Europe the gambit looked sound. The see-saw battle for control of the continent would take over three years to play out and eventually involve almost all of WWII's major players.

Up until El Alamein, Britain had been under the cosh from strong Nazi armour forces in the region. German commander Erwin Rommel's *Blitzkrieg* tactics had enjoyed much success, and by May 1942 two major Allied offensives had been repulsed: Hitler's Afrika Korps were perilously close to capturing Egypt. El Alamein constituted a 'last stand' of sorts for the Allies. British General Claude Auchinleck had won a tentative victory over Rommel in the First Battle of El Alamein in early July 1942, but British PM Churchill had become increasingly impatient. He removed Auchinleck to India and handed over the reins to General Bernard Montgomery.

Unit Cost

Monty's restructuring of the 8th Army is now the stuff of WWII legend; he combined a determination to sever the German supply lines, a cognisance of the close relationship between land units and air support, while rallying troop morale by promising to "hit Rommel for six out of Africa." Additionally, some 300 US-built Sherman tanks arrived to bolster ranks.

The first clash between Montgomery and Rommel occurred at Alam Halfa, a strong showing for the British in which Montgomery repulsed the German offensive and destroyed a number of German Panzers owing to crafty land mine placement. However, he chose not to seize the initiative and counter-attack… for the moment at least.

Aware that an Allied foray was incoming, Rommel was forced to adopt a defensive position. Lurking behind a minefield reinforced by anti-tank artillery referred to as 'the Devil's Gardens' by the

THE BATTLE'S KEY TANK — THE AMERICAN **M4A1 SHERMAN** TURNED THE TIDE AT EL ALAMEIN

The 30 ton M4A1 proved key at El Alamein. After three bloody days of infantry fighting, the arrival of this US-designed armour turned the tide. The most versatile tank of World War II, production of the M4 exceeded 50,000 units, and its chassis also served as the basis for numerous other armoured vehicles like tank destroyers, tank retrievers and even self-propelled artillery.





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Sherman tanks of the Eighth Army trundle across the desert sands.

Afrika Korps, they watched and waited. Rommel, however, was suffering from illness by this time – he departed for Germany and was relieved by General Georg von Stumme. In terms of numbers, the Germans boasted 110,000 men and 500 tanks – though many pieces of armour were of poor Italian origin, and no match for Montgomery's Shermans. Meanwhile, the Allies possessed over 200,000 men, more than 1,000 tanks and a devastating six-pound artillery gun.

Montgomery's deploying of the dummy operation 'Bertram' went a ways to convincing his German opponent that the attack would emanate from another direction. The eventual offensive consisted of two stages. The former, 'Operation Lightfoot', involved a seismic artillery bombardment following by an infantry pincer attack involving the 30th Corps (located in the north) and the 13th Corps (stationed in the south.) The troops would navigate their way through the Devil's Gardens, clearing a safe zone for the armoured divisions of the 10th Corps. Lightfoot commenced on the night of 23 October; strong German defences meant the British progress was arduous.

Sand Storm

Towards the end of the month a still-poorly Rommel was forced to return from convalescence in Europe to once again take command of Nazi forces – Von Stumme having succumbed of a heart attack during battle. On 1 November Montgomery launched the second phase of the attack, 'Operation Supercharge', as British and New Zealander infantry made way for armour and the Shermans rumbled ominously towards the German ranks. Owing to an inopportune sandstorm and desperate German resistance, 75% of the 123 tanks of the Allied 9th Brigade were eventually destroyed… yet reinforcements meant the German forces were now consistently outnumbered and outgunned.

On 2 November, Rommel signalled to his beleagured Führer that the Axis forces faced annihilation. Hitler ordered his Field Marshall to 'stand and die', but the German-Italian Panzerarmee was already in full retreat – finally succumbing on 4 November. It to be the first and only great land battle won by the British and Commonwealth forces without direct American participation during WWII and – crucially – also persuaded a reluctant French to start cooperating in the North African campaign.

The climactic instalment of El Alamein was a bloodbath – 25,000 Germans and Italians had been killed or wounded versus 13,000 Allied troops – but it also created a military legend. A true turning point of not only the North African campaign but the entire Second World War, it also cemented the iconic status of the heroic Allied 'Desert Rats' and – perhaps most importantly – instigated the fall of Fascist Italy. Some fallout for a battle that took place in far-away Africa. ■


After the Axis minefield had been negated, Montgomery pushed forwards.

BATTLE QUOTES

"The battle is going very heavily against us. We're being crushed by the enemy weight…We are facing very difficult days, perhaps the most difficult that a man can undergo."

ERWIN ROMMEL
GERMAN FIELD MARSHAL

"This is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning."

WINSTON CHURCHILL
BRITISH PRIME MINISTER

"Before Alamein we never had a victory. After Alamein we never had a defeat."

WINSTON CHURCHILL
BRITISH PRIME MINISTER

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World of Warships

MAKING A SPLASH

Get on board for a battle royale with **WORLD OF WARSHIPS**.

At last, it's time to take to the seas. Wargaming have already achieved dominance on the battlefield with *World of Tanks* and mastery of the skies with *World of Warplanes*, so where else is there to take the action? Some of the most pivotal battles of World War II took place at sea, and the era – including the years before and after the war itself – saw some extraordinary ships constructed and deployed. It's only natural, then, that Wargaming bring their free-to-play ▸



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"The steel giants in *World of Warships* could wipe the floor with a Tiger from 5km away"

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World of Warships



Don't venture too near to the shallows, ships with deeper hulls could run aground.



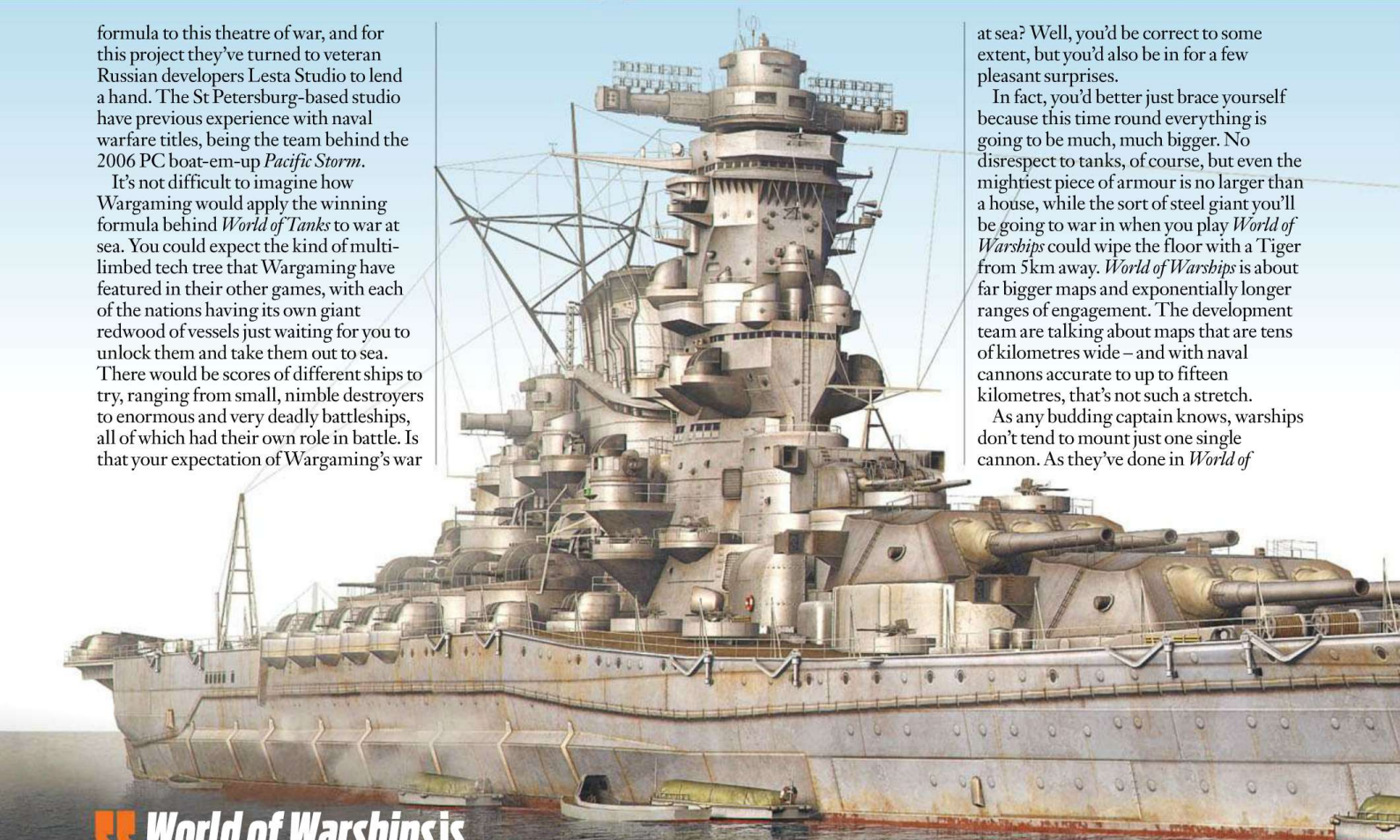
Wargaming and Lesta Studios are recreating history's most famed vessels with stunning accuracy.

formula to this theatre of war, and for this project they've turned to veteran Russian developers Lesta Studio to lend a hand. The St Petersburg-based studio have previous experience with naval warfare titles, being the team behind the 2006 PC boat-em-up *Pacific Storm*.

It's not difficult to imagine how Wargaming would apply the winning formula behind *World of Tanks* to war at sea. You could expect the kind of multi-limbed tech tree that Wargaming have featured in their other games, with each of the nations having its own giant redwood of vessels just waiting for you to unlock them and take them out to sea. There would be scores of different ships to try, ranging from small, nimble destroyers to enormous and very deadly battleships, all of which had their own role in battle. Is that your expectation of Wargaming's war at sea? Well, you'd be correct to some extent, but you'd also be in for a few pleasant surprises.

In fact, you'd better just brace yourself because this time round everything is going to be much, much bigger. No disrespect to tanks, of course, but even the mightiest piece of armour is no larger than a house, while the sort of steel giant you'll be going to war in when you play *World of Warships* could wipe the floor with a Tiger from 5km away. *World of Warships* is about far bigger maps and exponentially longer ranges of engagement. The development team are talking about maps that are tens of kilometres wide – and with naval cannons accurate to up to fifteen kilometres, that's not such a stretch.

As any budding captain knows, warships don't tend to mount just one single cannon. As they've done in *World of*



"*World of Warships* is about far bigger maps and much, much longer ranges of engagement"

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Yes, the scenery looks nice and no, you shouldn't take time to admire it. You're being shelled.



Attach a radar to boost your detection range: you can't hit what you can't see...

Warplanes, Wargaming want to provide players with something else to fire – and as a ship's captain you can expect to have torpedoes at your disposal on many vessels, and larger ships will also be bristling with AI-controlled secondary weapons. While you can't fire every one of these yourself, you can set their targeting priorities. You are the captain, after all.

Cruising to victory

Warships have been grouped into four different classes, with mighty battleships and battlecruisers forming the 'heavy' class. At the other end of the spectrum are destroyers, which have nowhere near as much firepower but are fast, manoeuvrable and armed with deadly torpedoes. Bridging the gap between the two is a range of light and heavy cruisers, while aircraft carriers exist in a category all of their own and have some very different, very special powers (see Carrier Command below for the full lowdown).

Whatever ship you set sail in, you can be sure it will be as accurate as possible a representation of either a real vessel, or at least a ship that was once sketched out on a drawing board somewhere. Wargaming love including prototypes and concepts among the more common vehicles in *World of Tanks* and *World of Warplanes*. Once again the developer will be demonstrating the same wide reach and attention to detail that they brought to *World of Tanks*, and you can expect to see a large and ever-growing selection of ships waiting for you to take their helms.

Even within each of the four ship classes there'll be many different sub-classes, such as battlecruisers or light cruisers, escort carriers or fleet carriers. As well as the ships that can be unlocked as you climb up the tech tree, there will also be a selection of premium ships available to buy with gold currency – and the plan is for your *World of Tanks*, *World of Warplanes* and *World of Warships* accounts to be shared, so you can spend your gold (and even your free experience) in any of them.

At launch, *World of Warships* will feature the vessels of two navies, the US and Imperial Japan, but the plan is to expand to include the famous British Royal Navy, the German Kriegsmarine, and the navies of France, Italy and even Russia. While some of these countries might have had more famous navies than others, they have all featured a diverse range of ships and – with the inclusion of prototypes and concepts – Wargaming could choose to feature such vessels as the German aircraft carrier Graf Zeppelin, which was sketched out but never completed.

CARRIER COMMAND Penetrating the hull of this unique class

Carriers may not be as well armed as rival ships, but their critical contributions to battles come as observers and mobile airfields. Like artillery in *World of Tanks*, they'll hang back from the main conflict and instead strike from afar by launching air wings towards enemy ships. Crafty, but effective.

These little planes can be controlled in the classic real-time strategy fashion – through pointing and clicking – and as military history as shown, air power can be extraordinarily dangerous at sea. Ships will possess extensive anti-aircraft capabilities to help fight them off, with some cruisers specialising in AA cover – plus there's also the possibility for one carrier's aircraft to intercept another's. Each fresh sortie you send forth may suffer losses and, since you'll naturally only have a limited number of planes, you can't be flippant about their deployment.

While *World of Tanks* has fixed spawn locations, if *World of Warships* were to do the same it would be too simple for carrier aircraft to quickly scout out the location of enemy vessels and give their team a chance to strike. To avoid this, Wargaming are making sure they randomise the starting locations of both sides in every battle. When the fight begins, you will never be sure exactly where your enemies are.

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World of Warships



It's not just about the big guns – torpedoes will also be deadly weapons.

Wargaming's attention to detail will be demonstrated not only in the breadth of ships on offer, but also in how realistic they'll look. Each ship will not only be carefully crafted, modelled down to the smallest details, but their internal structure will also be represented – with the ships divided into compartments like engine room, magazines and so forth.

These compartments can be damaged according to where enemy fire strikes, and a direct hit to a section such as the torpedo reserves could prove disastrous. Your officers may also be injured in battle and this will harm the effectiveness of the departments they control: lose your gunnery officer and your aim will be affected. Those officers gain experience over time, in a similar way to crews in *World of Tanks*, and the performance of your ship can be greatly affected by their skills and abilities.

The thickness of each ship's armour is also a factor and the developers will again deploy the expertise they've consistently demonstrated in *World of Tanks* to calculate shell penetration according to such factors as ammunition type, angle of attack and armour thickness. Battleships like the Bismarck, HMS Hood or USS



Every captain hopes to make a splash. With their shells, that is.

DIVING DEEP Wargaming talk specifics, and we listen...

Aiming at the enemy
"You will have to predict the position of impact of your salvo, although the game will show you the exact dispersion ellipse of that zone."

Size of the playing areas
"The maps will be 60km by 60km."

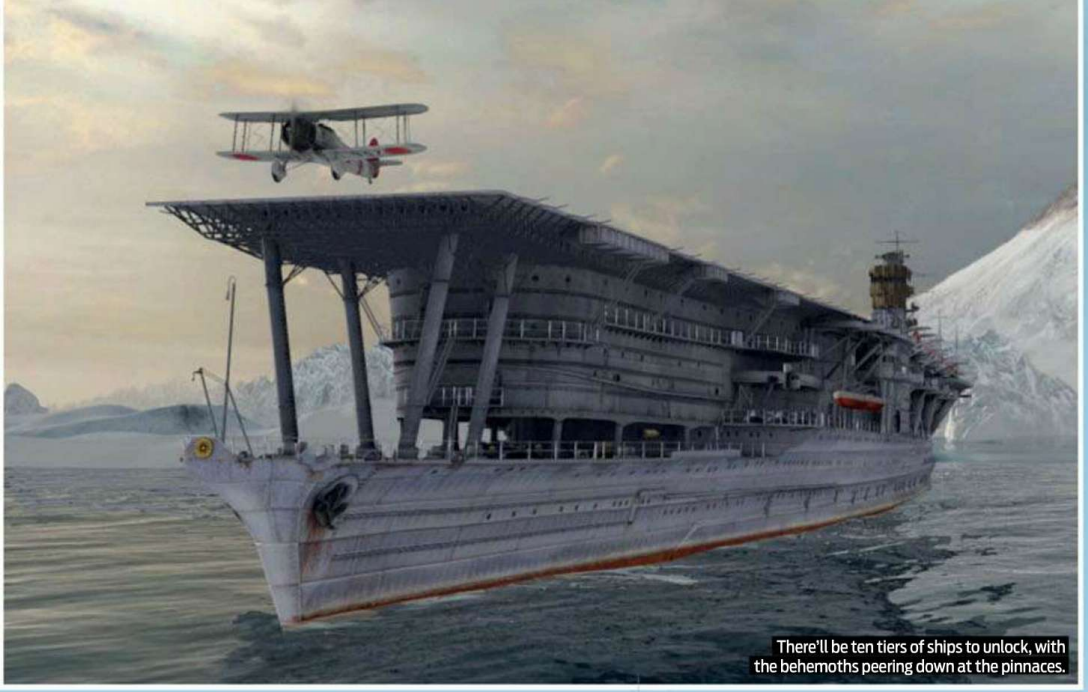
The approximate number of ships in each nation's tree
"37 – at least."

Ship weaponry
"There will be predefined lists of what you can mount onto the ship, and all armament and machinery will be in that lists. We call them pre-sets. Everything that is listed in pre-set will be installable at once; players will not be allowed to mount each AA gun manually."

Cruiser tech trees
"There will be separate heavy and light cruiser branches, with some exceptions."

Deciding to integrate *World of Tanks*' cruise control feature
"There is standard WASD for movement, and QERF for cruise control, plus you can lock the position of rudders with Q or E."

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There'll be ten tiers of ships to unlock, with the behemoths peering down at the pinnaces.



A battleship's armour is incredibly thick, but there are a few weak points.

Texas frequently had armour as thick as 360mm (about 14in) – these giants were built to take a pounding.

Strike it lucky

This means accuracy is going to be very important indeed. A well-aimed strike is going to be worth a dozen glancing blows, and it won't always be necessary to reduce an enemy ship to zero hit points. The flotation of each vessel is taken into account and, as it receives damage in battle, it's entirely possible that a ship might start sinking long before its hit points have been whittled down fully – particularly if it has been struck below the waterline.

A defeated ship won't always take a slow and serene route to the bottom, either, and may well break apart, explode or capsize in a spectacular fashion. And, of course, you certainly won't want your vessel to run aground, a very real danger on some of the maps.

Those maps are looking very impressive too, and while the open sea might not be the most exciting of places for an engagement, that gives Wargaming every excuse to have players fighting around some extremely scenic coastal areas, islands and reefs. Factor in weather and environmental effects – which the developers plan to add in some time after release – and suddenly you have a lot more intel to consider when you take your seat on the bridge.

In *World of Warships*, spotting and tracking the enemy is vitally important, as you can't hit what you can't see, but what your comrades fighting alongside you can see can also be communicated to any other captains in range. As well as line of sight, which might spot an enemy ship many kilometres away, there's also the effectiveness of camouflage patterns and radar detection to consider. Radar will act as a boost to line of sight and, quite naturally, the size of a ship will be one of the factors determining just how easy it will be to locate.

All this paints a picture of a game that has several fathoms of tactical depth to it, as well as good old blasting action, and where slick teamwork and strong communications will make an enormous difference to your chances of success. Wargaming have already illustrated within *World of Tanks* that they can create a fair and balanced model for free-to-play gaming, and they can apply that model again in *World of Warships*. With that model already established, they're free to concentrate on making the best naval combat game they possibly can, and it looks like they're throwing in everything but the kitchen sink.

We shouldn't have much longer to wait to set sail with *World of Warships*, then. The developers reckon they expect to launch the game later this year, but before a general release version exists they'll be hosting a closed alpha to help them test the game. At the moment, this is "no sooner than the summer", but with the days ticking by, that's really not so far over the horizon. ■

"A defeated ship won't slip serenely to the bottom; it may break apart, explode or capsize"

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Competition

WIN!

Win an unforgettable day out driving tanks and smashing stuff up...

You're a Panzer nut. A true tanker. You've played around with many a virtual tank, romped across floodplains in a T-34, decimated a platoon of Tigers, relived the glory of El Alamein in your Sherman that's been reskinned so that General Monty's face is emblazoned over your front plate. Okay... maybe not that final one. Regardless, you're ready for the next stage in your love affair with all things armour – and we're ready to deliver.

Behold – PC Gamer has teamed up with Wargaming to present the mother of all tank competitions. Take a journey to Northamptonshire for a packed morning and afternoon that includes driving vehicles including a FV432 armoured personnel carrier, the amphibious Russian Gvozdika tank, a Humvee and a Lance Missile Carrier over a purpose-built course packing precipitous slopes, yawning mud pools... and more.

In-between the tank-based carnage, you'll listen to lectures on terrorism and the Great War, load and fire classic flintlock muskets and wield stealth-silenced 12 gauge shotguns.

There's also a spot of SAS action, where you'll attend a briefing on land mines, trip wires and other elements of jungle warfare – before demonstrating your newfound skills on a woodland patrol, navigating your way through booby-trapped woods.

The top competitor on the day will even get to crush a car in a Chieftain Main Battle Tank, so make sure you don't park *too* close to it on arrival. Put simply, if you're even vaguely interested in tanks this is a day in a million.





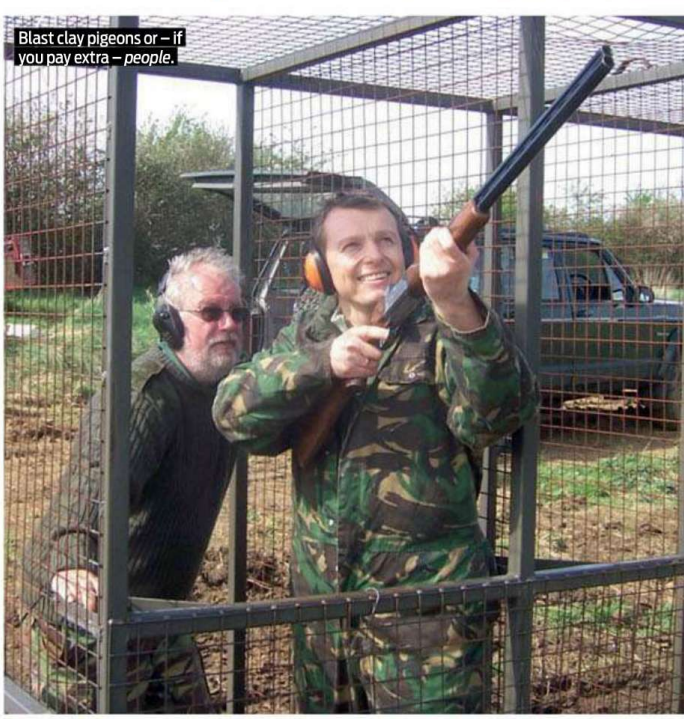
That's the trade-in plan down the toilet, then.



Pose in a wedge of armour and look butch.



Informative talks punctuate the carnage.



Blast clay pigeons or – if you pay extra – *people*.

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Nope, we didn't realise Father Ted was a tank fan either.

Photo credits: Tanks A lot



How to win

TANKS A LOT

To be the envy of your tanker pals, we want you to design us the ultimate tank. What would it look like? What weapons would it pack? What colour camo? Send us drawings, blueprints, models, full size replicas... anything to convince us you're the No. 1 armour fiend.

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